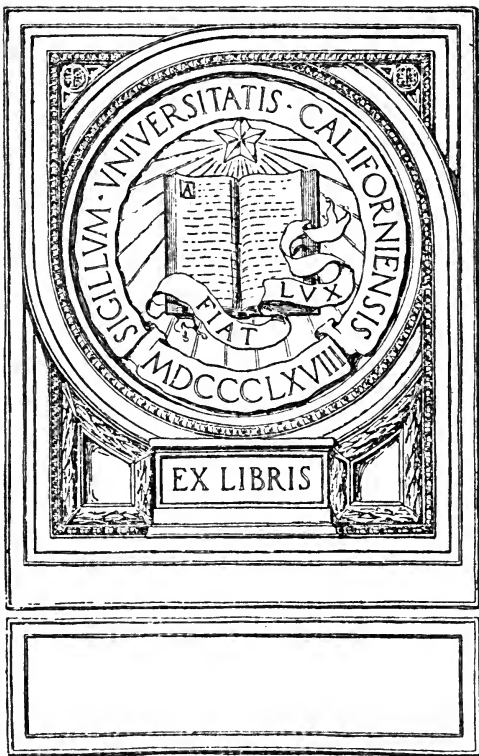


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MILTON.

AREOPAGITICA.

A Speech to the Parliament of England for
the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing.

WITH

INTRODUCTION, FULL TEXT, NOTES AND APPENDIX.

BY

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PREFACE.



IN preparing this edition of Milton's *Areopagitica*, every care has been taken to provide help for the young student whose experience of the masterpieces of English Literature has yet to ripen. For this reason references to illustrative passages from other writers have been as limited as possible, and such only are quoted as the student may reasonably be expected to have met.

The numerous references to classical writers, particularly to those of Greece, have caused the addition of a brief *résumé* of the history of Greek philosophy, which should prove a useful addition.

The text has been carefully modernised in spelling and in punctuation from Arber's Reprint, of which a page has been reproduced, in order that the student may form some acquaintance with the spelling of the time,

Advantage has been taken of the work of many previous editors, and acknowledgment is given in the notes. The almost century-old edition of Holt-White has been specially valuable.

C. W. C.



INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Life of Milton.

FROM 1608 to 1674, during sixty-six of the most stormy years of England's history, during the great struggle for civil and religious liberty, the life of John Milton extended, and the storm and struggle are deeply graven on the record of his work. Like the poet Spenser, whom he loved, and to whose *Faerie Queen* he refers in the *Areopagitica*, he was a Londoner, born in Bread Street, almost within touch of Bow Church, in the very centre of "this vast city, a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty" (*Areopagitica*).

Parentage and Early Education.—His father, a scrivener or law writer, who had been disinherited for turning Protestant, had determined that his son should receive every educational advantage, with a view to entering the Church. His earliest tutor was Thomas Young, who afterwards became an eminent Nonconformist divine, while from his father he gained that love of music which he afterwards "married to immortal verse." Of his mother but little is known, except that from her Milton probably inherited that weakness of the eyes which finally developed into blindness.

School and College.—In 1620, at the age of twelve, he entered *St. Paul's School*, and here laid the foundation of that profound classical education which is reflected in every line of his work, whether prose or poetry. Greek, Latin, Syriac, Hebrew, French and Italian were amongst the subjects he studied, and studied deeply, while his later references to:—

"Sweetest Shakspeare, fancy's child." (*L'Allegro.*)
and to

"Jonson's learned sock." (*L'Allegro.*)

show that his love of English literature was not confined to the poet Spenser, and that he never forgot amid his classical studies that:—

“English is the language of men ever famous and foremost in the achievements of liberty.” (*Areopagitica*.)

After five years at St. Paul's Schools, where he initiated himself into the craft of poets by paraphrasing Psalms cxiv. and cxxxvi., he entered *Christ's College, Cambridge* in 1625 as a pensioner. Here he seems to have indulged in none of those noisy revels, so pardonable in the young, but rather, by his quiet manner and studious disposition, to have merited the nickname, “Our lady of Christ's,” which was soon bestowed upon him. He left Cambridge in 1632, with his M.A. degree, after a seven years' stay, admired by all for his profound learning, and with the reputation of having

“Scorned delights, and lived laborious days.” (*Lycidas*.)

The Hymn to Christ's Nativity, a few odes and epitaphs (one to Shakespeare), and his first sonnet are the poetic results of these seven years.

Five Years' Happiness at Horton.—The next five years of Milton's life were spent in the peace of the rural village of Horton, in Buckinghamshire. The quiet Cambridge student kept himself aloof from the busy world, and continued his academic studies in the pleasant country lanes and fields of John Hampden's county. The dawn of the great struggle seems to have passed by him almost unheeded, and the delightful poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* and the *Masque of Comus*, are the natural consequences of such a life. His monody, *Lycidas*, written in 1637, shows the first signs of the flame which was to burn so hot within him, and sooner and with greater effect than he thought, he was to aid in the fulfilment of his menace against the corrupt clergy of—

“That two-handed engine at the door”

which

“Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more,”

Foreign Travel, 1638-1639.—A short stay in France and a longer stay in Italy, where he made the acquaintance of Grotius and Galileo, was ended abruptly by the state of affairs in England. He thought it base to be travelling for his pleasure abroad while his countrymen were contending for their liberty at home, and he returned to England, not, as Dr. Johnson unkindly remarks, to take an active part in the fight, but to keep a school.

Keeping School.—If, however, Milton did not at once plunge into the vortex of the civil strife, he took two steps which were well calculated to prepare him for active warfare. In 1639, he commenced a small private school, in which he taught his nephews and the children of a few friends, and in 1643 he married Mary Powell, the daughter of a Buckinghamshire friend, a marriage which proved unhappy. After a separation of two years they were reconciled in 1645, and lived together until her death, which occurred in 1652.

Twenty Years of Prose.—These were, however, but the preludes, the pauses before the leap; and in 1641, impelled by his great desire for liberty of thought, Milton plunged into the battle of pamphlets:—

“There are three species of liberty which are essential to the happiness of social life—religious, domestic and civil; and as I had already written concerning the first, and the magistrates were strenuously active in obtaining the third, I determined to turn my attention to the second, or the domestic species.”—MILTON'S *Second Defence of the People of England*.

His pamphlets on reformation and episcopacy appeared in 1641, and in 1644 he published his two *Tractates on Divorce*, a *Tractate on Education*, and the *Areopagitica*, the two first following naturally on his own development, the last compelled from him by his love of liberty. From this year until the Restoration, from the bright aspirations and hopes of the man of thirty-six to the calmer philosophy of age, through the home troubles which were probably only the

result of his own natural disposition, in spite of the blindness which fell upon him in 1652—"bating not one jot of heart or hope"—at the age of forty-four, Milton fought for liberty with a pen that was much mightier than his sword could ever have been, in English or in Latin, but always "with his left hand," as he called his prose. In 1649, he became Latin Secretary to Cromwell, and wrote his *Eikonoklastes*, or Image-breaker, a reply to *Eikon Basilike*, or The Kingly Image, a pamphlet written in defence of Charles I. His principal works from that time to 1660 were his two books "*Defensio pro Populo Anglicano*," published in 1651 and 1654 respectively.

During these twenty years, the poet in him was almost suppressed, *occasional sonnets* alone breaking the long line of controversial pamphlets, but even in these last appear "purple patches." The fire of poetic genius was only smouldering, for surely such a passage as the eulogy of England in the *Areopagitica* is poetry bursting the chain of prose:—

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms."

A Poet Again, 1660-1671.—Blind, saddened by the loss of his second wife, Catherine Woodcock, in 1658, and by the unfilial conduct of his daughters, with all his efforts for civil and religious liberty apparently rendered vain by the Restoration, Milton turned once more to poetry, and in his *epics* *Paradise Lost* (1666), *Paradise Regained* (1671), and *Samson Agonistes* (1671) gave to the world:—

"The magnificence of Spenser with the severity of Calvin."

—(TAIN.)

His last years, brightened by the happy and cheerful company of his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, whom he had married in 1664, were spent in Bunhill Fields, and peacefully, "of the gout struck inwards," he passed away on Sunday, November 8th, 1674. In the chancel of St. Giles, Cripplegate, where he was buried, there is no mark of the exact spot where he rests.

Milton's Contemporaries.—Milton was born at the time when the brilliant light of the Elizabethan literature was at its height. The poet SPENSER, whom he loved, and whom he quotes in *Areopagitica*, had died eight years before, SHAKESPEARE was just about to lay down his pen, BEN JONSON and BEAUMONT and FLETCHER were to write a few years longer, and the long list of minor Elizabethan dramatists was to fade away to extinction during his youth.

Of prose writers, BACON had still some of his most important work to do—he is quoted in the *Areopagitica*—and finished his most important work, *Novum Organum*, in 1620.

The Contemporaries of Milton in the literary world were neither numerous nor in general worthy of remembrance.

Religious writers abounded, and JEREMY **Contemporaries.** TAYLOR, the writer of *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, is the best remembered of them. The poets GEO. HERBERT (*The Temple*), HERRICK (*Hesperides*), and WALLER alone are still read. Political thought and controversy ran deep and strong, and HOBBS (*De Cive* and *Leviathan*) and MILTON were at the head. JOHN SELDEN is probably better remembered by the general reader for his *Table Talk* than for his erudite works on law. SIR THOMAS BROWNE (*Religio Medico*), JOHN BUNYAN (*Pilgrim's Progress*), the satirist BUTLER (*Hudibras*), and IZAAK WALTON (*The Compleat Angler*) are famous through all time.

A crowd of younger writers, of a newer school and of different type, was beginning to work its way through the

frivolous follies of the Restoration during the last years of Milton's life, and the names of DRYDEN, LOCKE, SIR ISAAC NEWTON, and PEPYS are amongst the best known of these.

Of foreign writers SALMASIUS, who engaged him in controversy, "the famous GALILEO grown old," and GROTIUS, famed for his works on international law, are most connected with the life of Milton. In France, the dramatist CORNEILLE was writing his tragedies.

Summary of the Chief Incidents of the Life.



- 1608. Born in London.
- 1620-1625. St. Paul's School. (*Paraphrase of Psalms cxiv. and cxxvi.*)
- 1625-1632. At Christ's College, Cambridge. (*Odes. Hymn to the Nativity.*)
- 1632-1637. At Horton. (*L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Comus, Lycidas.*)
- 1638-1639. Travels in France and Italy.
- ✓ 1639-1640. Keeping School.
- 1640-1660. Period of Prose and Sonnets.
 - 1644. *Tractate on Education, Tractate on Divorce, Areopagitica.*
 - ✓ 1649. *Eikonoklastes.*
 - ✓ 1651. *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano.*
 - ✓ 1654. *Defensio Secunda.*
- 1643. Married Mary Powell.
- 1649. Cromwell's Secretary.
- 1652. Blindness.
- ✓ 1653. Mary Powell died.
- ✓ 1656. Married Catherine Woodcock.
- ✓ 1658 1658. Catherine Woodcock died.
- 1660. Short imprisonment.
- ✓ 1660-1671. Period of Epic Poetry.
 - 1666. *Paradise Lost.*
 - 1671. *Paradise Regained,*
 - 1671. *Samson Agonistes.*
- ✓ 1664. Married Elizabeth Minshull.
- 1674. Death.

Cause and Effect of Areopagitica.



The Star Chamber Decree, issued in July, 1637, and a summary of which follows this article, although drastic enough in its provisions, failed in its effect, and although Laud had said that he wished to see the day when no Jack gentleman in England would stand before a clergyman with his hat on, a deluge of pamphlets and books denouncing the evils of prelates and government had been issued.

The Parliament Decree.—So long as the stream of public opinion flowed in their favour, the Long Parliament did not interfere, but when its Presbyterian leaders found that some of its proceedings were being challenged, they issued their own ordinance, one quite as drastic as that of the Star Chamber. This was in June, 1643. "New Presbyter was but old Priest writ large."

Milton's Reasons for Writing.—In his Second Defence of the English people Milton states his reason for using the pen rather than the sword, and for taking up this particular subject. His words are:—

"I was always less remarkable for strength of constitution than for vigour of intellect. I left to others the fatigue of a camp, and entered on pursuits in which I might exert myself with a fair promise of success, that, instead of offering the weakest part of my nature to the disposal of my country, I might bring to them all the weight in my power by the exercise of what in me is best." (*Defensio Secunda.*)

"I seem to lead back, as if from a distance, Liberty, long a fugitive and an exile, to her home among the nations."

(*Defensio Secunda.*)

"There are three species of liberty which are essential to the happiness of social life—religious, domestic and civil; and

as I had already written concerning the first, and the magistrates were strenuously active in obtaining the third, I determined to turn my attention to the second, or the domestic species. As they seemed to involve three material questions—the conditions of the conjugal tie, the education of children, and the free publication of the thoughts—I made them objects of distinct consideration. . . . Lastly, I wrote my *Areopagitica* after the true Attic Style, in order to deliver the press from the restraints with which it was encumbered; that the power of determining what was true and what was false, what ought to be published and what to be suppressed, might no longer be entrusted to a few illiterate and illiberal individuals, who refused their sanction to any work which contained views or sentiments at all above the level of the vulgar superstition."

(*Defensio Secunda.*)

His zeal for liberty was, however, more directly attracted towards this subject by the fact that his tractate on Divorce had been called in question in August, 1644, and Milton had been called before the House of Lords to defend his work.

The Effect of the Pamphlet does not appear to have been remarkable at first. The Long Parliament continued sternly on its course, and, in 1647, carried matters a stage further by passing its Ordinance for the Suppression of Plays and Interludes. The Independents, however, do not appear to have carried out the ordinance with severity, and the arguments of Milton seem to have led to the resignation of Mabbett, the Licenser, in 1649. Mabbett gave as his reason for resigning:—

"That many thousand scandalous and malignant pamphlets were appearing with his endorsement, although he himself had never seen them."

"That the employment was unjust and illegal."

"That licensing is as great a monopoly as ever was in that all men's judgments are to be bound up in the Licenser's."

These arguments are Milton's, and no doubt were borrowed by Mabbett.

It is somewhat curious in this connection that Milton himself acted as a sort of licenser, or inspector, of the

"Mercurius Politicus," during the year 1651, although his work would appear to have been more that of an editor than of a licenser.

Thus, with greater or less severity, the licensing of the press was carried out. The Restoration reintroduced the methods of the Star Chamber, and an act was passed in 1662 very similar in terms to the Parliamentary Ordinance of 1643. The Licenser, L'Estrange, acted with severity, and applied his sponge to Milton's *History of Britain*, *Paradise Lost* narrowly escaping similar treatment.

For seventeen years the Act of 1662 kept in force, and it was again renewed in 1685, to meet its final end in 1694. Since that time, there have been attempts at renewal, particularly at times of intense political heat, but to-day the Press of England enjoys the liberty which Milton wrote for, and the whole English-speaking world does not suffer because a few may transgress.

The Star Chamber Decree.



The Star Chamber Decree against unlicensed printing was issued on July 11th, 1637, and consists of 33 clauses.

A brief summary of them is given below :

1. Seditious, schismatic, or offensive books or pamphlets not allowed in the realm under pain of fine, imprisonment, or other corporal punishment.

- 2 and 3. All books and pamphlets to be licensed ; the licensers being :

For law works : The Lord Chief Justices and the Lord Chief Baron.

For state affairs : The Secretaries of State.

For heraldry : The Earl Marshal.

For all others : The Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishops of London.

The Universities to license their own.

4. The licensing officer to print his *imprimatur* on the books allowed.
- 5 and 6. Books are not to be smuggled in from abroad.
7. The copyright of the Stationers' Company to be maintained.
8. Names of printers and authors to appear on the book.
- 11 and 12. English books not to be printed on the Continent.
15. Twenty printing presses to be allowed, in addition to His Majesty's Press and the University Presses.

18. Reprinted works to be re-licensed.
24. Unallowed printers to be set in the pillory and whipped through the City.
- 25 and 26. The Masters and Wardens of the Stationers' Company, and the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London to have power to search for and seize unlicensed presses.
27. Four founders of type allowed.
31. Offenders to be bound by sureties not to re-transgress.
32. Books to be imported into London only.
33. The Bodleian library to have a copy of every book published.

The clauses not mentioned deal with the number of apprentices and journeymen allowed to each printer or founder, and regulate their relations to each other.

Ordinance.



FOR CORRECTING AND REGULATING THE ABUSES OF THE PRESS.*

Die Mercurii, 14th die Junii. 1643.

Whereas divers good Orders have been lately made by both Houses of Parliament, for suppressing the great late Abuses and frequent Disorders in printing many, false forged, scandalous, seditious, libellous, and unlicensed Papers, Pamphlets, and Books to the great Defamation of Religion and Government; which Orders (notwithstanding the Diligence of the Company of Stationers, to put them in full Execution) have taken little or no Effect; by reason of the Bill in Preparation, for Redress of the said Disorders, having hitherto been retarded through the present Distractions; and very many, as well Stationers and Printers, as others of sundry other Professions not free of the Stationers Company, have taken upon them to set up sundry private Printing Presses in Corners, and to print, vend, publish and disperse Books, Pamphlets and Papers, in such Multitudes that no Industry could be sufficient to discover or bring to Punishment all the severall abounding Delinquents; and, by reason that divers of the Stationers Company and others, being Delinquents (contrary to former Orders and the constant Custom used among the said Company) have taken Liberty to print, vend and publish, the most profitable vendible Copies of Books, belonging to the said Company and other Stationers, especially of such Agents as are employed in putting the said Orders in Execution, and that by Way of Revenge for giving Information against them to the Houses for their Delinquency in Printing,

* Reprinted from the Journals of the House of Lords.

to the great prejudice of the said Company of Stationers and Agents, and to their discouragement in this Public Service:

It is therefore ORDERED, by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, That no Order or Declaration of both, or either House of Parliament shall be printed by any, but by Order of One or both the said Houses: nor other Book, Pamphlet, or Paper, shall from henceforth be printed, bound, stitched or put to sale by any Person or Persons whatsoever, unless the same be first approved of, and licensed under the Hands of such Person or Persons as both, or either of the said Houses shall appoint for the Licensing of the same, and entered in the Register Book of the Company of Stationers, according to ancient Custom, and the Printer thereof to put his name thereto; and that no Person or Persons shall hereafter print, or cause to be re-printed any Book or Books, or Part of Book or Books heretofore allowed of and granted to the said Company of Stationers for their Relief and Maintenance of their Poor, without the Licence or Consent of the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the said Company; Nor any Book or Books lawfully licensed and entered in the Register of the said Company for any particular Member thereof, without the Licence and Consent of the Owner or Owners thereof; nor yet import any such Book or Books, or part of Book or Books formerly printed here, from beyond the Seas, upon Pain of forfeiting the same to the respective Owner or Owners of the Copies of the said Books, and such further Punishment as shall be thought fit:

And the Master and Wardens of the said Company, the Gentleman Usher of the House of Peers, the Serjeant of the Commons House and their Deputies, together with the Persons formerly appointed by the Committee of the House of Commons for Examinations, are hereby Authorized and required, from Time to Time, to make diligent Search in all Places where they shall think meet, for all unlicensed Printing Presses, and all Presses any Way employed in the Printing of

scandalous or unlicensed Papers, Pamphlets, Books, or any Copies of Books, belonging to the said Company, or any Member thereof, without their Approbation and Consents; and to seize and carry away such Printing Presses, Letters, together with the Nut, Spindle, and other Materials of every such irregular Printer, which they find so misemployed, unto the Common Hall of the said Company, there to be defaced and made unserviceable according to ancient Custom; and likewise to make diligent Search in all suspected Printing-houses, Warehouses, Shops and other Places for such scandalous and unlicensed Books, Papers, Pamphlets, and all other Books, not entered, nor signed with the Printer's name as aforesaid, being printed or reprinted by such as have no lawful Interest in them, or any Way contrary to this Order, and the same to seize and carry away to the said Common Hall, there to remain till both or either House of Parliament shall dispose thereof, And likewise to apprehend all Authors, Printers, and other persons whatsoever employed in compiling, printing, fitting, binding, publishing and dispersing, of the said scandalous, unlicensed, and unwarrantable Papers, Books and Pamphlets, as aforesaid, and all those who shall resist the said Parties in searching after them; and to bring them before either of the Houses, or the Committee of Examinations, that so they may receive such further Punishments as their Offences shall merit; and not to be released until they have given Satisfaction to the Parties employed in their Apprehension for their Pains and Charges, and given sufficient Caution not to offend in like sort for the future; and all Justices of the Peace, Captains, Constables and other Officers, are hereby ORDERED and Required to be aiding and assisting to the aforesaid Persons, in the due Execution of all and singular the Premises, in the Apprehension of all Offenders against the same; and in case of Opposition to break open Doors and Locks:

And it is further ordered, that this Order be forthwith printed and published, to the End that Notice may be taken thereof, and all Contemners of it left inexcusable.

Style and Argument.

Classic model.—Milton himself acknowledges that the form of his pamphlet was inspired by the Oration of Isokrates to the Great Council of Athens, called the Areopagus, an oration written about the year 400 B.C. The objects of the two orations, however, are entirely dissimilar, that of Isokrates being to induce the Areopagus to open its doors only to men of worth and dignity, and to restore the democratic institution of Solon.

The *Areopagitica* is therefore a written speech, and is, in consequence, in the first person, giving it thus a more direct path to the readers it wished to influence. Like its classic model, too, it is divided into Exordium, or Opening Statement, Argument, and Peroration or Close. An analysis of these follows this chapter.

Criticisms.—The following are among the criticisms which have been levelled against the work:—

“Some tedious historical digressions, and some little sophistry.”
(WARTON.)

“Our language sank under him.” (ADDISON.)

“Through all his greater works there prevails a uniform peculiarity of diction, a mode and cast of expression which bears little resemblance to that of any former writer; and which is so far removed from common use that an unlearned reader, when he first opens his book, finds himself surprised by a new language. . . . He had formed his style by a perverse and pedantic principle. He was desirous to use English words with a foreign idiom. . . . He wrote no language, but formed a Babylonish dialect in itself harsh and barbarous, but made by exalted genius and extensive

learning, the vehicle of so much instruction and so much pleasure, that, like other lovers, we find grace in its deformity." (DR. JOHNSON.)

"Milton was a very bad prose-writer. He remained poor and without glory." (VOLTAIRE.)

"He has transformed into his native idiom the dignified forms and phraseology of Attic oratory." (HOLT WHITE.)

"It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery." (MACAULAY.)

"The polemical writings of Milton, which chiefly fall within this period, contain several bursts of his splendid imagination and grandeur of soul. They are, however, much inferior to the *Areopagitica*, or Plea for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing. Many passages in this famous tract are admirably eloquent; an intense love of liberty and truth glows through it, the majestic soul of Milton breathes such high thoughts as had not been uttered before; yet even here he frequently sinks in a single instant from his highest flights to the ground; his intermixture of familiar with learned phraseology is unpleasing, his structure is affectedly elaborate, and he seldom reached any harmony. If he turns to invective, as sometimes in this treatise, it is mere ribaldrous vulgarity blended with pedantry; his wit is always poor and without ease. An absence of idiomatic grace, and an use of harsh inversions violating the rules of the language, distinguish, in general, the writings of Milton, and require, in order to compensate them, such high beauties as will sometimes occur." (HALLAM.)

"Even in his finest passages he never seems to know or care how a period is going to end. He piles clause on clause, links conjunction to conjunction, regardless of breath, or sense, or the most ordinary laws of grammar. In his very highest flights he will drop to grotesque and bathos. . . . A harsh and sometimes both needless and tasteless adaptation of Latin words . . . a rugged and grandiose vocabulary." (SAINTSBURY.)

Sentences Long and Involved.—For ourselves, we find the instances of classic form not numerous enough to form a serious blot on the book, the historical digressions interesting and *à propos*: the chief difficulty to the modern reader springs rather from the inordinate length and careless conjunction of sentences, which is almost a necessary evil with writers in this “*periodic*” style—a style of which Milton is the last example. Sentence is added to sentence, period balanced against period, clauses linked or contrasted until the passage becomes a labyrinth, and both writer and reader are lost. For example, take the two following passages:—

“For had an angel been his discipliner, unless it were for dwelling too much upon Ciceronianisms, and had chastised the reading, not the vanity, it had been plainly partial; first to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for scurril Plautus, whom he professes to have been reading not long before; next to correct him only, and let so many more ancient fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil teaches how some use may be made of *Margites*, a sportful poem not now extant, writ by Homer; and why not then of *Morgante*, an Italian Romance much to the same purpose?” (l. 406-417.)

“Seeing therefore that those books, and those in great abundance which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppressed without the fall of learning and of all ability in disputation, and that these books of either sort are most and soonest catching to the learned, from whom to the common people whatever is heretical and dissolute may quickly be conveyed, and that evil manners are so perfectly learnt without books a thousand other ways which cannot be stopped, and evil doctrine not with books can propagate, except a teacher guide, which he might also do without writing, and so beyond prohibiting, I am not able to unfold how this cautelous enterprise of licensing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts.” (ll. 578-590.)

Loose Constructions.—The following passages are examples of “loose construction”:—

“*Those which otherwise came forth*, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectual remedy.” (l. 1669-1671.)

"*There is a vision recorded by Eusebius . . . and, besides, has nothing of a fever in it.*" (l. 418.)

"*That other leading city of Greece, Lacedæmon, considering that Lycurgus their law-giver was so addicted . . . it is to be considered how museless and bookish they were.*" (l. 191-198.)

The student will find it difficult to show in analysis the function of the passages we have marked in italics.

Ellipses.—A third evil of style is found in Milton's tendency to ellipses, a tendency fortunately shown less in his prose writings than in his poetry, but even in his prose of sufficient frequency to add to the difficulty of grasping the author's meaning:

"The books not many which they so dealt with." (l. 273.)

"There be who perpetually complain." (l. 1273.)

"Besides yet a greater danger which is in it." (ll. 1597, 1598.)

"Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love peace better." (l. 1471.)

"But now the Bishops abrogated and voided out the church." (l. 1090.)

Language Majestic.—Whatever stress may be laid upon Milton's adherence to classic form, and however much we may censure the length and loose connection of his sentences, we must acknowledge that in the *Areopagitica* these faults appear much less frequently than in his other prose works, and that, when the sentences are freed from their entanglements, the language is majestic and sonorous, rising at times to the eloquent imagery of the poet, while the argument is put clearly, consecutively, and forcibly.

Biblical Illustrations.—The reader will notice that Milton is careful to play upon the fondness of his audience for the Bible, dragging in Moses, Daniel, and St. Paul to form one of the weakest of his arguments, and that he is equally vigorous in playing upon their intense hatred for the Pope and Spain.



Limited Toleration.—Strong as Milton's plea is for liberty and for toleration, he wrote too near the times of religious persecution, and was too much imbued with the Puritan spirit to advocate the toleration of the Papist.

"This doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian, that many be tolerated rather than all compelled. *I mean not tolerated popery.*" (U. 1569-1571.)

To use his own adjective, this is a "cloistered" toleration, too narrow in its limits for the modern mind.

Personalities.—The Peroration or close of the Speech also is somewhat marred by the personal reflection which the writer makes upon the promoters of the Ordinance.

Wordsworth's Sonnets.—In spite of these small blemishes, the book remains a splendid example of Milton's zeal for liberty, a zeal which compelled him to write boldly and fearlessly against the side on whose behalf he had but shortly before been equally bold and fearless. The circumstances under which the book was written, the objects for which it fights, called forth the eloquent cry of Wordsworth when, one hundred and fifty years later, the face of Europe was dark with gathering gloom:—

"Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour,
England hath need of thee; she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay."

Other Views on the Subject.—Many writers since Milton have taken up the subject which he had the honour of being the first to bring forward, and while most have agreed with his argument and conclusion, the agreement had been by no means universal. Those who have written on the subject on the same side have invariably borrowed most of their arguments from Milton, and the great *Mirabeau* of the French Revolution, published in 1789 what is almost a translation of the work into French.

“The liberty of the Press may be claimed as the common right of mankind,” and “we may conclude that the liberty of England is gone for ever when these attempts (*i.e.* attempts at licensing) shall succeed.” (HUME.)

“It seems not more reasonable to leave the right of printing unrestrained because writers may be afterwards censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because by our laws we can hang a thief.” (DR. JOHNSON.)

“The danger of such unbounded liberty (of Unlicensed Printing), and the danger of bounding it, have produced a problem in the science of government which human understanding seems unable to solve.” (DR. JOHNSON.)

Arguments for Licensing.—The principal arguments adduced on the opposite side are :

- (a) Unrestrained printing is dangerous to religion.
- (b) Unrestrained printing is dangerous to government.
- (c) Scandal will be published.
- (d) No man ought to write what he would be ashamed to own.

In the England of to-day the views of Milton have triumphed, and a free press exerts its powerful influence generally to the greatest benefit of the people. Where the bounds of decency or of fair comment are overstepped, the law deals with the individual case. The whole press is not muzzled because one printer loses his reason. In the words of the learned Selden,

“Above all, Liberty,”

or in the phrase attributed to King Alfred,

“A people have liberty when they are free as thought is free.”

Peculiarities of Grammar and Spelling.



In the chapter dealing with Style and Argument mention has already been made of—

- (a) *Long and involved sentences.*
- (b) *Loose connection.*
- (c) *Ellipses.*

and illustrations of these are there given.

(1.) **Latin Forms.**—Milton is very much blamed, particularly by Dr. Johnson, for attempting to force the Latin idiom into English prose. In the *Areopagitica*, for instance, we find:—

- 1. *Latinised expressions, such as:* There be who; e.g., “*There be who perpetually complain.*” (l. 1273.)
- “*There be who envy and oppose.*” (l. 1514.)

after the Latin idiom “*Sunt qui.*”

- 2. *Absolute expressions; e.g.,* “*But now the Bishops abrogated and voided out the Church.*” (l. 1090.)
- “*After all which done.*” (l. 876.)

in imitation of the Latin ablative absolute.

- 3. *Adaptation of the Latin use of the Gerundive* implying necessity or obligation; e.g., “*Under pretence of the poor in their company not to be defrauded.*” (ll. 1687, 1688.)

“*Why was he not . . . to be expelled by his own magistrates?*” (ll. 650, 651.)

- 4. *Latin Form of Participle;* e.g., “*extirpate*” for extirpated, in imitation of Latin *extirpatus*.

- 5. *Abundant Use of Words of Latin Origin.*

(2.) **English of the Period.**—Other variations from Modern English which will strike the reader, and which are not the

result of any peculiarity in Milton's style, but merely the general style of the period, are:—

(a) *The Freer Use of Inflexions to Express Degree.*—These were used both in Milton's time and during the Elizabethan period much more freely than at present, and were added to adjectives, and even adverbs, regardless of the number of their syllables. In *Areopagitica* occur such forms as *ancientest* (l. 540), *diligentest* (l. 894), *accuratest* (l. 901), *exquisitest* (l. 941), *gladlier* (l. 1120).

(b) *Accurate Use of Conditional Form of Verb.*—The careless use of the Indicative so prevalent to-day finds no warrant from the prose of Milton, who uses the Conditional form with accuracy and judgment, *e.g.* :—

“It *had been* much more expedient.” (l. 481.)

“Though he *were* the most malicious libeller.” (l. 655.)

“Unless their care *were* equal.” (l. 664.)

(c) *Peculiar Prepositional phrases.*—

“There is yet *behind of* what.” (l. 1221.)

“*Easy to* refutation.” (l. 1208.)

“*Provided of.*” (l. 674.)

“We *esteem not of.*” (l. 726.)

“*Condemned of* introducing licence.” (l. 161.)

The last is in accordance with the Latin idiom, and all are similar to the French usage, showing the Norman-French influence.

(d) *Absence of the form “its.”*—This was only just coming into use in Milton's time, and is used by him only three times, and not once in this book.

(e) *Use of Past Participles and Past Tenses*, such as *catched* (l. 166), *forbid* (l. 261), *writ* (ll. 549, 877), *forgot* (l. 575). There seems to have been a dislike for the participial ending “*en*” during this period, and the correct form of the past participle had not yet been fixed.

(f) *Words Used with Different Meaning*.—States (l. 1), fearfulness (l. 935), prevent (l. 624), censure (l. 8), remember (l. 1099), conceit (l. 306), painful (l. 119), frustrate (l. 708), let (l. 1656), vulgar (l. 783), fond (l. 666) puny (l. 886), several (l. 1689), collusion (l. 1516).

(g) *Strange or Obsolete Forms*.—Whenas (ll. 977, 986, etc.), laic (l. 997) obligation (l. 37), cautelous (l. 589), dispreaders (l. 594), inquisiturient (l. 355), scurriel (l. 410), ding (l. 911), disinured (l. 1213), homogeneal (l. 1283), diuidual (l. 1139), ambushments (l. 1527), disconformity (l. 1496).

Other peculiarities are pointed out in the Notes.

Spelling.—The spelling of the text has been modernised, in order to lessen the difficulty of the student in reading it. We reproduce, however, on next page, from Arber's Reprint of the *Areopagitica*, in Milton's own spelling, a typical page printed in the old style.

Milton seems to have varied his spelling from that usual in his period, principally on phonetic principles, and sometimes also for etymological reasons. Thus, he writes: *hauty* for haughty, *hight* for height, *schollers* for scholar, *lerning* for learning, *debtors* for debtors, *piatza* for piazza, *siniories* for signories, *mountanous* for mountainous, *parlament* for parliament, while *sovrain* for sovereign, *sent* for scent, *eremite* for hermit, *frontispice* for frontispiece, are more nearly correct in etymology.

The form *voutsafe* for vouchsafe seems to be peculiar to Milton.

From Arber's Reprint of Areopagitica (p. 68).



" Lords and Commons of England, confider what Nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governours: a Nation not flow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious and piercing spirit, acute to invent, futtle and finewy to difcours, not beneath the reach of any point the higheft that human capacity can foar to. Therefore the ftudies of learning in her deepeft Sciences have bin fo ancient, and fo eminent among us, that Writers of good antiquity, and ableft judgement have bin perfwaded that ev'n the fchool of *Pythagoras*, and the *Perfian* wifdom took beginning from the old Philofophy of this Iland. And that wife and civill Roman, *Julius Agricola*, who govern'd once here for *Cæfar*, preferr'd the naturall wits of Britain, before the labour'd ftudies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal *Tranfilvanian* fends out yearly from as farre as the mountanous borders of *Ruffia*, and beyond the *Hercynian* wildernes, not their youth, but their itay'd men, to learn our language, and our *theologic* arts. Yet that which is above all this, the favour and the love of heav'n we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending towards us. Why elfe was this Nation chos'n before any other, that out of her as out of *Sion* fhould be proclam'd and founded forth the firft tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all Europ. And had it not bin the obftinat perversnes of our Prelats againft the divine and admirable fpirit of *Wicklef*, to fuppreffe him as a fchifmatic and *innovator*, perhaps neither the *Bohemian Huffe* and *Jerom*, no nor the name of *Luther*, or of *Calvin* had bin ever known: the glory of reforming all our neighbours had bin compleatly ours. But now, as our obdurat Clergy have with violence demean'd the matter, we are become hitherto the lateft and the backwardeft Schollers, of whom God offer'd to have made us the teachers. Now once again by all concurrence of figns, and by the generall inftinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and folemnly exprefse their thoughts God is decreeing to begin fome new and great period in his Church, ev'n to the reformation of Reformation it felf."



AREOPAGITICA,

A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing.

THEY, who to states and governors of the Commonwealth direct their speech, High Court of Parliament! or wanting such access in a (private condition), write that which they foresee may advance the public good—I suppose them as

Areopagitica. Milton copied his title from Isokrates, a Greek orator, who addressed an oration to the "Areopagus" or Athenian Council about the year 400 B.C. The object of the oration of Isokrates, the "old man eloquent," as Milton calls him in the Sonnet to Lady Margaret Ley, was to awaken in the minds of the Areopagus a greater sense of their own dignity, and to re-construct the democratic institutions which Solon, the great Greek law-giver, had introduced, and which had been allowed to decay. The "Areopagus" was so named because the Council held its meetings on the hill of Mars (*Areios* = of Mars, *pagos* = the hill). Isokrates called his speech the *Areiopagitikos logos*.

Although the subjects of the two speeches are dissimilar, they are alike in form, as Milton has adopted the classic divisions of his matter:—*Exordium* or opening, *Statement*, *Argument*, *Peroration*; and they are alike also in that it is addressed to the great cil of the Realm.

A speech. The tract is written in the first person, as though actually delivered to his audience, thus giving the argument greater directness. Milton, therefore, is what he describes later as a "private orator" or writer of speeches.

Unlicensed Printing. The Decrees of the Long Parliament on the subject, passed in 1643, and a *résumé* of the Decree of the Star Chamber of 1637, are printed in the appendix.

1. They who. Milton is praised for writing "they" instead of the less correct "those," but the first word of the oration is an example of Milton's carelessness in construction, as it is a *nominative* form in apposition to the *objective* "them" in l. 4. Such an error is called an *anacoluthon*.

1. states, powers in the state, ruling men.

2. wanting, lacking.

3. private condition. Milton, not being a member of Parliament, but a private individual, has to write what he wishes them to read:

at the beginning of no mean endeavour, not a little altered) and moved inwardly in their minds: some with doubt of what will be the success, others with fear of what will be the censure; some with hope, others with confidence of what they have to speak. And me perhaps each of these dis-
 10 positions, as the subject was whereon I entered, may have at other times variously affected; and likely might in these foremost expressions now also (disclose which of them swayed most, but that the very attempt of this address thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion, far more welcome than incidental to a preface. Which though I stay not to confess ere any ask, I shall be blameless, if it be no other, than the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who wish and

5. altered, disturbed in mind.

7. success, result, whether good or bad. Not as now used only of good results.

8. censure (L. *censura* = an assessing), like success, meant opinion, whether good or bad, but has undergone an inverse change in meaning, *success* having limited itself to its good meaning, while *censure* has followed the more general degradation in meaning, like the words *knave* , *churl* , etc.

8. confidence of. The proposition here has a peculiar use. The meaning is, that others have confidence *because* of what they have to speak, *i.e.* , because they know that their subject is good.

9. me, one of Milton's favourite inversions.

10. as the subject was. Milton's principal previous works in prose were:— *Of Reformation in England* , 1641; *" Prelatical Episcopacy, "* 1641;

" Reasons of Church Government, " 1641; *" Tractate on Education, "* 1644; *" Tractate on Discipline and Divorce, "* 1644.

11. likely, possibly.

12. disclose, apparently has no grammatical subject, but "I" is understood. "I might possibly disclose in these opening sentences which of these dispositions most affected me, but the very attempt at making this speech, and the knowledge of the persons it addresses, have brought me into a state of enthusiasm more welcome to me, than is natural in a preface." Milton means that the thoughts of his subject make impossible any cold analysis of his reasons for writing.

13. address thus made. A Latinised form. See Chapter on Language.

16, 17. stay not to confess, etc. Do not delay my confession till I am asked. Confess at once.

18. it, helping in the cause.



Handwritten text, possibly a title or header, is visible at the top of the page. The text is faint and appears to be written in cursive or a similar script. It is mostly illegible due to fading and the quality of the scan.

promote their country's liberty; whereof this whole discourse proposed will be a certain testimony, if not a trophy. For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth—that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained that wise men look for. To which if I now manifest by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that we are already in good part arrived, and yet from such a steep disadvantage of tyranny and superstition grounded into our principles as was beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery, it will be attributed *first*, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God our deliverer, *next*, to your faithful guidance and undaunted wisdom, Lords and Commons of England! Neither is it in God's esteem the diminution of His glory, when honourable things are spoken of good men and worthy magistrates; which if I now first should begin to do, after so fair a progress of your laudable

19. discourse proposed, a Latinism; cf. l. 13 above.

20. testimony, if not a trophy. A "trophy" was a pile of captured arms fixed on the trunk of a tree to mark the place where an enemy had turned in flight (Gr. *tropé* = a turn), and hence was a sign of victory. Milton's book remained a testimony of his fight for liberty until 1694, when the withdrawal of the restrictions on printing made it a "trophy."

26. which, i.e., "the utmost bound of civil liberty" mentioned above.

27. are . . . arrived. Milton uses the verb "to be" instead of "to have" with verbs of motion; a usage similar to the French; cf., *ils sont arrivés*.

The Presbyterians were then in power, and Milton was only just beginning to learn that a Presbyterian in power was very like a Priest.

28. tyranny and superstition; i.e., the sway of the Papist and the Prelate.

29, 30. beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery. The Romans under their Emperors sank into a depth of luxury, vice, and indolence from which they were unable to recover. The English manhood was able to shake off its shackles of tyranny and superstition.

36. so fair a progress. Refers to the various acts of the Long Parliament, particularly to the destruction of the Prelates. See Historical Notes.

deeds, and such a long (obligement) upon the whole realm to your indefatigable virtues, I might be justly reckoned among the tardiest and the unwillingest of them that praise ye.

40 Nevertheless there being three principal things, without which all praising is but courtship and flattery, *First*, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise: *next*, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed; *the*

other, when he who praises, by showing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not; the former two of these I have heretofore (endeavoured, rescuing the employment from him who went about to) impair your merits with a trivial and malignant

50 encomium; the latter as belonging chiefly to mine own acquittal, that whom I so extolled I did not flatter, hath been reserved opportunely to this occasion. For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye the best covenant of his fidelity, and that his loyalest affection

37. **obligement**, in Modern English "obligation."

39. **unwillingest**. See Chapter on Language.

39. **ye**. The word "ye," used now only in poetry, is generally employed only as a nominative, as it is in Anglo-Saxon, but in the writings of Shakespeare and Milton it is used indifferently. The Revised Version uses it. It is the correct A.S. nominative.

44, 45. **the other**. We should say now "the third." *Other*, of course, correctly means the *second of two*.

48. **endeavoured** essayed, endeavoured to carry out.

48. **him**. Hall, Bishop of Norwich, who had given very cold praise to the Parliament

in his "Defence of the Humble Remonstrance against the Frivolous and False Exceptions of Smectymnuus," published 1641. This reply led him into a controversy with Milton, who blamed him for overlooking the higher virtues of Parliament and giving praise to trivial matters.

48, 49. **went about to**, tried to find ways to:

49. **malignant**, seeking to belittle the power and influence of Parliament. The term was usually applied by the Puritans to the Royalists.

51. **whom**, (those) whom. One of Milton's ellipses. See Chapter on Language.

55. **loyalest**, cf. *unwillingest*, l. 39.

clear //

clear

too subtle. Most members of Parliament
couldn't understand this.

Illustrate characteristic of Milton's prose
as well as 17th century prose. It is highly
organized, not like a link joined to
it has a differentiated form.

50, 2nd edition - 1725

Arthur waiting list

and his hope waits on your proceedings. His highest praising is not flattery, and his plainest advice is a kind of praising: for though I should affirm and hold by argument, that it would fare better with truth, with learning, and the Commonwealth, if one of your published Orders, which I should name, were called in; yet at the same time it could not but much redound to the lustre of your mild and equal government, whenas private persons are hereby animated to think ye better pleased with public advice, than other statist^s have been delighted heretofore with public flattery. And men will then see what difference there is between the magnanimity of a triennial Parliament, and that jealous haughtiness of prelates and Cabin Counsellors that usurped of late, whenas they shall observe ye in the midst of your victories and successes more gently brooking written exceptions against

56. **waits**, singular verb with two nominatives connected by "and."

60. **one of your published Orders**. The order for licensing printing was published in November, 1643.

63. **whenas**, that, seeing that.

64. **statists**, statesmen.

67. **triennial Parliament**. Not a Parliament lasting three years, but a Parliament to be called at least once in three years. The Long Parliament passed an Act in 1641 to this effect in order to make impossible the recurrence of another eleven years' interval like that between 1629 and 1640, when Charles ruled alone. The *Triennial Bill*, passed in 1694, enacted that no Parliament should last more than three years. It was repealed in the year 1716.

68. **prelates**. The reference is to the Star Chamber and the

Court of High Commission, under the control of Laud and his followers.

68. **Cabin Counsellors**, or Cabinet. Charles, during the eleven years of no Parliament, had ruled by the advice of some selected favourites, whom he formed into a Committee of Council. The cabinet in its modern sense really began in the reign of William III.

68. **of late**, *i.e.*, until the strong action of the Long Parliament.

68. **whenas**, when. The *as* has a strengthening or intensifying effect. At the very time when.

69, 70. **victories and successes**. Essex in Cornwall, June, 1644; Marston Moor in July, 1644.

70. **brooking written exceptions**, allowing pamphlets to appear, which took exception to their action.

a voted Order than other Courts, which had produced nothing worth memory but the weak ostentation of wealth, would have endured the least signified dislike at any sudden Proclamation. If I should thus far presume upon the meek demeanour of your civil and gentle greatness, Lords and Commons, (as what your published Order hath directly said, that to gainsay, I might defend myself with ease, if any should accuse me of being new or insolent, did they but know how much better I find ye esteem it to imitate the old and
 80 elegant humanity of Greece, than the barbaric pride of a Hunnish and Norwegian stateliness. And out of those ages, to whose polite wisdom and letters we owe that we are not yet Goths and Jutlanders, I could name (him) who from his private house wrote that discourse to the Parliament of Athens, that (persuades) them to change the form of democracy which was then established. Such honour was done in those days to men who professed the study of wisdom and eloquence, not only in their own country, but in other lands, that cities and signiories heard them gladly, and with
 90 great respect, if they had aught in public to admonish the

71. other courts, the Star Chamber and Court of High Commission.

75. civil, cultivated, polished. The manners of the citizen as contrasted with those of the peasant. See Note to l. 82.

76, 77. as what . . . that to gainsay, to gainsay that which your published order hath directly said.

78. new or insolent, strange or presumptuous.

80. elegant humanity of Greece. "Humanity" here means "culture," and is still used in this sense in the Scottish universities. Milton was himself, of course, a great admirer of the Greek literature, as the title, language and form of this speech show.

81. Hunnish and Norwegian stateliness. An allusion to the rougher ceremonies and more barbaric revels of the Scandinavian and German tribes.

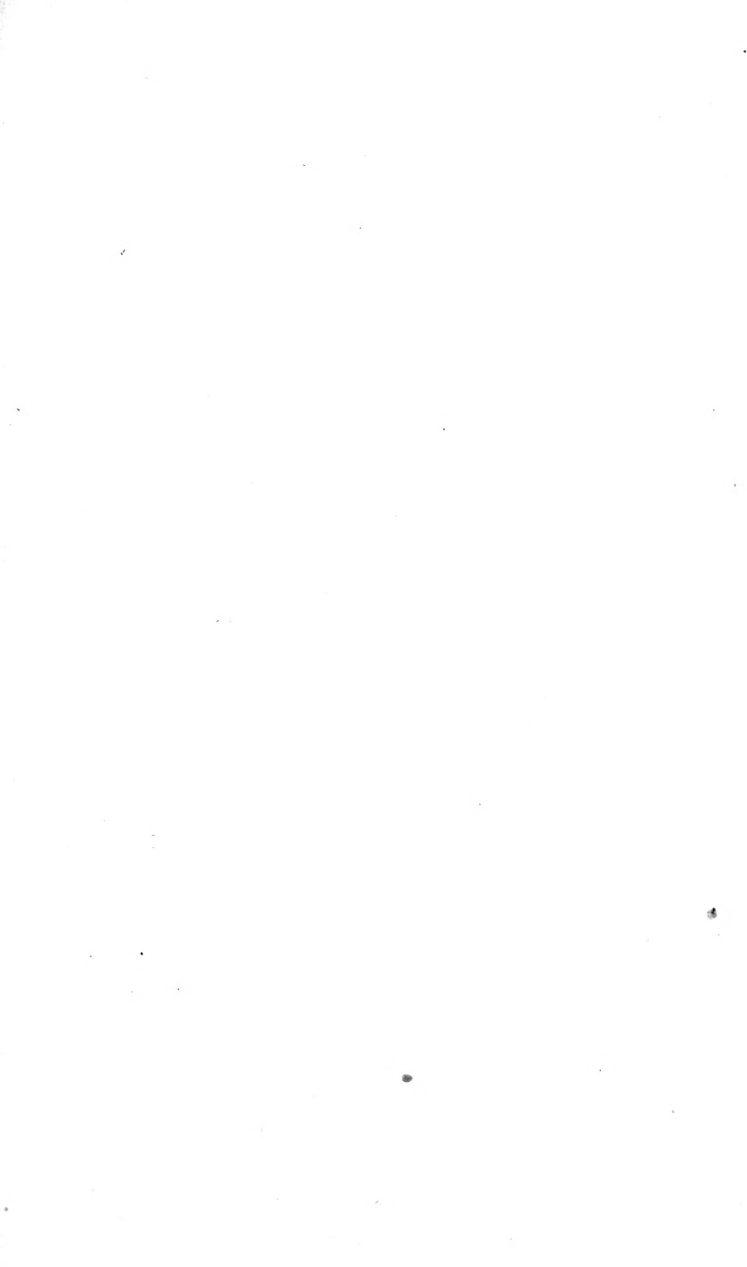
82. polite, polished (Greek, *polis*=a city). Used like civil (l. 75. Latin *civis*=a citizen).

83. Goths and Jutlanders, i.e., uncivilised barbarians, like the Goths, who destroyed the Roman power; or the Northmen who overran England and France.

83. him, Isokrates.

85. persuades, endeavours to persuade.

89. signiories. Land ruled by a "signor" or lord, a lordship. Milton spells it *siniories*, in keeping with its Italian pronunciation.





state. Thus did Dion Prusæus, a stranger and a private orator, counsel the Rhodians against a former edict: and I abound with other like examples, which to set here would be superfluous. But if from the industry of a life wholly dedicated to studious labours, and those natural endowments, haply not (the worst for two and fifty degrees) of northern latitude, so much must be derogated as to count me not equal to any of those who had this privilege, I would obtain to be thought not so inferior as yourselves are superior, to the most of them who received their counsel: and how far you excel them, be assured, Lords and Commons, there can no greater testimony appear, than when your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeys the voice of reason, from what quarter soever it be heard speaking; and renders ye as willing to repeal any act of your own setting forth, as any set forth by your predecessors.

91. **Dion Prusæus.** Dion of Prusæus in Bithynia. He was an orator of such eloquence as to be called Chrysostom, or golden-mouthed, and was expelled from Rome by Domitian. He afterwards returned to Rome and died there in 117 A.D. The discourse referred to is one in which he found fault with the Rhodians for altering the names and inscriptions on their old statues and replacing them by brasses of living favourites.

91, 92. **a private orator,** a writer of speeches, like Milton himself and Isokrates.

94, 95. **wholly dedicated to studious labours.**

"I must say, therefore, that after I had from my first years, by the ceaseless diligence and care of my father, whom God recompense, been exercised to the tongues and some sciences, as my age would suffer, by sundry masters and teachers both at home and in the schools . . . but much latelier in the private academies of Italy . . . I might

perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes as they should not willingly let it die."—*Reasons of Church Government.*

"As soon as I was able I hired a spacious house in the city, for myself and my books, where I again, with rapture, resumed my literary pursuits."—*Defensio Secunda.*

96. **two and fifty degrees,** the latitude of London.

96. **the worst,** as Milton wrote instead of "the worse."

97. **derogated,** taken from me.

104. **it be heard,** Milton's accurate use of the subjunctive mood.

106. So far this is the *Exordium* or opening of the speech, in which Milton has given his reasons for writing, and has prepared his audience to lend him a favourable hearing by lauding their past good deeds, and by declaring their willingness to reconsider. We next get the *Statement* and the *Argument*.

If ye be thus resolved, as it were injury to think ye were not, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to show both that love of truth
 110 which ye eminently profess, and that uprightness of your judgment which is not wont to be partial to yourselves; by judging over again that Order which ye have ordained "*to regulate Printing:—That no book, pamphlet, or paper shall be henceforth printed, unless the same be first approved and licensed by such,*" or at least one of such as shall be thereto appointed. For that part which preserves justly every man's copy to himself, or provides for the poor, I touch not: only wish they be not made pretences to abuse and persecute honest and painful men, who offend not in any of these
 120 particulars. But that other clause of Licensing Books, which we thought had died with his brother *quadragesimal* and *matrimonial* when the prelates expired, I shall now attend with such a homily, as shall lay before ye, First the inventors of it to be those whom ye will be loth to own; next, what is to be thought in general of reading, whatever sort the books be; and that this Order avails nothing to the suppressing of

107. The three subjunctives in this line are worthy of notice.

116. **every man's copy**, etc. See the second half of the second section of the Order, beginning: "And that no person or persons shall hereafter print." Milton, of course, approves respect for copyright.

119. **painful**, full of pains, painstaking.

120. **that other clause**. See the first half of the second section.

121. **his, its**. See Chapter on Language.

121. **quadragesimal**, Lenten regulations retained by the Reformed Church.

122. **matrimonial**, Marriage

Licenses, against which Milton wrote in his "Tractate on Divorce."

122. **when the prelates expired**. The prelates were expelled from the House of Lords in 1641, but the Prelacy was actually abolished in 1646.

122, **shall now attend**, shall now direct my attention to.

123. **homily**. "The word originally meant (i.) communion, intercourse; (ii.) then especially the association of pupil with master, and so instruction; and (iii.) lastly, a special form of religious instruction."—HALES.

123 *et seq.* **First etc.** The four main divisions of Milton's argument should be learnt.



scandalous, seditious, and libellous books, which were mainly intended to be suppressed; last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop of truth, not only by disexercising and blunting our abilities in what we know 130 already, but by hindering and (cropping) the discovery that might be yet further made both in religious and civil wisdom.

I deny not, but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors: For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a (vial) the purest efficacy and (extraction) of that living intellect that bred 140 them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as (those fabulous dragon's teeth); and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; 145 but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself, kills the Image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is 150 no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary therefore what persecution we

130. **disexercising**, throwing out of exercise; cf., "disinured" (l. 1213).

131. **cropping**, cutting away.

139. **a vial**, a phial or flask. Gr. *phiale*.

140. **extraction**, essence.

142. **those fabulous dragon's teeth**. Cadmus, in Greek mythology, is supposed to have sown dragon's teeth, from

which sprung armed men. A similar story is told of Jason.

145. **who**, he who.

147. **in the eye**. The book is man's expression of his reason, his reason as seen by others. The killing of the book takes away the possibility of this sight, makes his reason *blind* or *invisible* to others, kills his reason, the image of God, in the eye.

160

raise against the living labours of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books; since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom, and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at that ethereal and fifth essence, the breath of Reason itself, slays an Immortality rather than a Life. But lest I should be condemned of introducing licence, while I oppose licensing, I refuse not the pains to be so much historical as will serve to show what hath been done by ancient and famous commonwealths against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licensing crept out of the Inquisition, was

154. **living labours**, the labours that live through their books.

154. **spill**, destroy.

155. **seasoned life**, *i.e.*, life preserved and stored.

156, 157, 158. **homicide, martyrdom, massacre**, an example of climax.

159. **elemental life; ethereal and fifth essence**. The reference is to the theory of Aristotle that the four elements, earth, air, fire and water, comprised the material world, and that a *fifth* or *quintessence* was peculiar to God and the soul of man. The ancient philosophers, who denied the immortality of the soul, yet thought that the fifth or quintessence, which they deemed to be knowledge, was immortal. Milton means that by destroying a book, not only is a material substance destroyed, but knowledge, immortality itself, is slain.

161. **condemned of**. We still say "accused of," but "condemned for."

161. **licence**. *Cf.* this with the *Vith Sonnet*:—

"Licence they mean when they cry Liberty."

Licence here is used in its second sense of looseness.

165, 166. **Inquisition; Prelates**. Introduced wherever possible by Milton as appealing to the feelings of hatred held for these by his hearers.

The *Inquisition*, or Holy Office, was introduced into Italy by Innocent III. to quell the Albigenses about the commencement of the 13th century. It spread into France and Spain, and became most formidable in the latter country under the rule of Torquemada, who became Grand Inquisitor in 1481. From that time the *auto da fe* (acts of faith), or public burning of heretics, and the most cruel tortures, became common. In the first year alone 2,000 are said to have been publicly burnt. An intense hatred of its objects and methods was felt in all Protestant countries, and particularly by the Puritans. *Cf.* Tennyson's *Revenge*:

"These inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain,"

"The thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord."





atched up by our Prelates, and hath caught some of our Presbyters.

In Athens, where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of; those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous. Thus the books of Protagoras were by the judges of Areopagus commanded to be burnt, and himself banished the territory for a discourse begun with his confessing not to know *whether there were gods, or whether not*: And against defaming, it was agreed that none should be traduced by name, as was the manner of *Vetus Comœdia*, whereby we may guess how they censured libelling; And this course was quick enough, as Cicero writes, to quell both the desperate wits of other atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event showed. Of other sects and opinions, 170

165, 166. **was caught; hath caught.** These expressions show the looseness which prevailed with regard to the use of the past participle.

166. **our Prelates.** A reference to the Star Chamber decree of 1637.

168. **Athens** was the most popular of all the Greek Republics in its forms and administration. Almost all the Greek writers of eminence were natives of Attica.

172. **Protagoras.** By the order of the Athenians Protagoras was banished from the city and territory and his books publicly burnt, because he could not say whether the gods existed or not. This is Cicero's statement. The book was "*Peri Theon*," i.e., "Concerning the Gods," and the banishment and burning took place in 411 B.C.

172. **Protagoras,** a Greek philosopher, about 400 B.C.

172. **Areopagus.** Note the correct omission of "the."

Areopagus was a place. We do not say Bishop of the London.

176, 177. **Vetus Comœdia,** or old comedy. The old comedy of Greece, the most famous writer of which was Aristophanes, freely introduced the names of living persons.

177. **censured, judged.**

178. **quick enough,** powerful enough. Quick, A.S. *cwíc*, meant originally "alive," and is still so used in the Creed—the "quick and the dead." The *quick* of the nail is the living part. Cf. *quicksands, quicken*.

178. **as Cicero writes;** in his work *De Natura Deorum*, where he describes the punishment meted out to Protagoras, and points out how stringent the ruling was, since not even a doubt could escape punishment.

178. **quell, kill;** A.S. *cwellan*=to kill.

180. **the event, the result.** The punishment of Protagoras brought an end to both blasphemous and libellous writings.

I though tending to voluptuousness, and the denying of Divine Providence, they took no heed. Therefore we do not read that either Epicurus, or that libertine school of Cyrene, or what the Cynic impudence uttered, was ever questioned by the laws. Neither is it recorded that the writings of those old comedians were suppressed, though the acting of them were forbid; and that Plato commended the reading of Aristophanes, the loosest of them all, to his royal scholar Dionysius, is commonly known, and may be excused, if holy Chrysostom, as is reported, nightly
 190 studied so much the same author and had the art to cleanse a scurrilous vehemence into the style of a rousing sermon. That other leading city of Greece, Lacedæmon, considering that Lycurgus their lawgiver was so addicted to elegant learning as to have been the first that brought out of Ionia the scattered

183. **Epicurus** founded a school in Athens about the year 310 B.C., and taught that virtue was the only way to real happiness. His followers degraded his principles, and made "happiness their being's end and aim." Self-indulgence and Epicureanism became, therefore, synonymous.

183. **libertine school of Cyrene** was founded by Aristippus in 370 B.C. He taught that pleasure was the only aim of life.

184. **Cynic impudence.** The Cynic school was founded about the same time by Antisthenes. A contempt for externals and a rude brushing away of specious coverings were the characteristics of the school, whose most famous member was Diogenes, the cynic of the tub. Cynic is from Gr. *kynikos* = log-like.

186. **were forbid**, subj. mood. Note *forbid* for *forbidden*.

187, 188. **Plato, Aristophanes,**

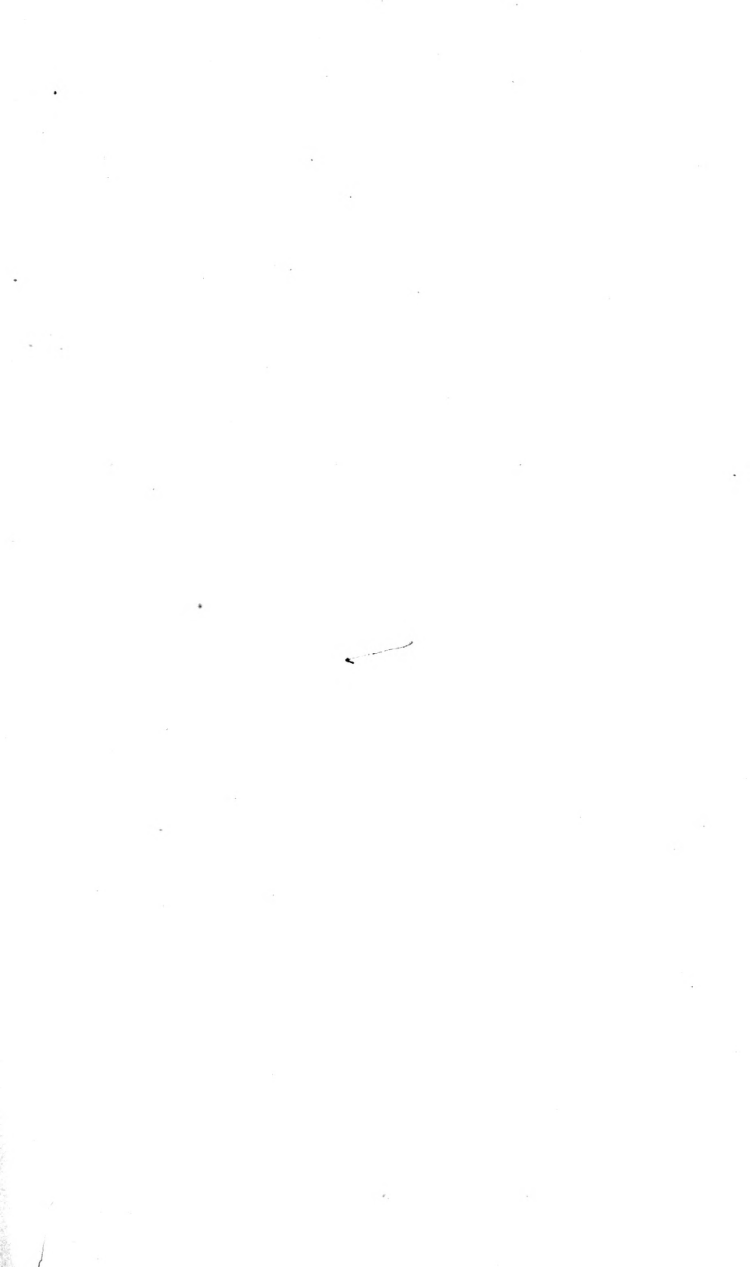
Dionysius. Plato recommended the comedies of Aristophanes to Dionysius, King of Syracuse, as the writings which would give him the best knowledge of the affairs and language of Athens.

187, 188. **the loosest of them all.** Milton repeats the opinion later, when he calls the writings of Aristophanes "books of grossest infamy" (l. 654).

189. **Chrysostom.** John, called Chrysostom, or "Golden-mouth," was patriarch of Constantinople in 397 A.D., and died in exile 407 A.D.

192. **Lacedæmon**, or Sparta, the chief city of Laconia, in Greece. The Spartans trained themselves to endurance and bravery, and were famous for their brevity of speech. Our modern word "laconic" is derived from the name of their country.

193. **Lycurgus**, King of Sparta, collected the poems of Homer and introduced them to the Spartans.



works of Homer, and sent the poet Thales from Crete to prepare and mollify the Spartan surliness with his smooth songs and odes, the better to plant among them law and civility, it is to be wondered how museless and unbookish they were, minding nought but the feats of war. There needed no licensing of books among them, for they disliked all but their own (laconic) apothegms, and took a slight occasion to chase Archilochus out of their city, perhaps for composing in a higher strain than their own soldierly ballads and roundels could reach to: Or if it were for his broad verses, they were not therein so cautious, but they were as dissolute in their promiscuous (conversing); whence Euripides affirms in *Andromache* that their women were all unchaste. Thus much may give us light after what sort of

195. **Thales**, or Thaletas, of Crete, a writer of odes. Müller says he lived two centuries after Lycurgus.

197. **civility**, politeness.

198. **museless**, without the taste for the Muses.

200. **laconic**. See Note above on Lacedæmon.

201. **apothegms**, Milton's spelling. Gr. *apophthengomai* = I speak my mind plainly.

201. **Archilochus**. Lived about the year 700 B.C. "Some writers of antiquity say that the Lacedæmonians banished Archilochus for an unpatriotic sentiment in a poem, wherein he had ventured to tell the citizens of Sparta that it was better for a man to throw away his arms than lose his life; but others assert it to have been for the indecent licentiousness of his verses that he was expelled the Republic." (HOLT WHITE.)

203. **ballads**. Milton's spelling is ballats. Cf. "ballatry," l. 685.

203. **roundel**. A roundel was originally a song sung to a circle dance. The term was then

applied to a song in which the first line was repeated again at the end of the verse. Cf. Chaucer's *Merciless Beauty*:—

"Your eyes two will slay me suddenly.

I may the beauty of them not sustain,

So woundeth it throughout my hearté kene,

And but your word will healen hastily

My heartés woundé while that it is green.

Your eyes two will slay me suddenly.

I may the beauty of them not sustain."

204. **broad**, licentious.

205. **conversing**, dealings with each other.

206. **Euripides**, in his *Andromache*, makes one of his characters, Peleus, bring this grave charge against the Spartan women. Euripides, however, wrote for an Athenian audience, and Sparta and Athens were keen rivals.

207. **after**, as to, according to.

"Neither reward us after our iniquities."—PRAYER BOOK.

207. **after what sort**, as to what way.



books were prohibited among the Greeks. The Romans also for many ages trained up only to a military roughness, resembling most of the Lacedæmonian guise, knew of learning little but what their twelve tables and the Pontific College with their augurs and flamens taught them in religion and law; so unacquainted with other learning, that when Carneades and Critolaus, with the Stoic Diogenes coming Ambassadors to Rome, took thereby occasion to give the City a taste of their philosophy, they were suspected for seducers by no less a man than Cato the Censor, who moved it in the senate to dismiss them speedily, and to banish all such Attic babblers out of Italy. But Scipio and others of the noblest senators withstood

210. guise, style. A doublet of "wise" or "ways"; O.F. *guise* from O.H.G. *wisa* = way.

211. twelve tables. The twelve tablets drawn up in B.C. 450, by the decemvirs of Rome, and forming the Roman legal code.

211. Pontific College. Pontifex (*Pons* = a bridge. *Facio* = I make) literally means a bridge builder. The Pontifices originally had charge of the building of the bridge over the Tiber, and as their studies led them to a knowledge of measures and numbers, they looked after the dates of the festivals and finally took charge of all the religious ceremonies.

212. augurs interpreted future events from the flight of birds.

212. flamens were priests attached to the worship of the various gods.

212, 213. so unacquainted; supply "were they."

213. Carneades; d. 129 B.C. While at Rome he gave two lectures on Justice, in the second of which he opposed the arguments of his first, and so

roused the ire of Cato, who called it playing with truth.

214. Critolaus belonged to the "Peripatetic" school.

214. Stoic Diogenes, not the cynic.

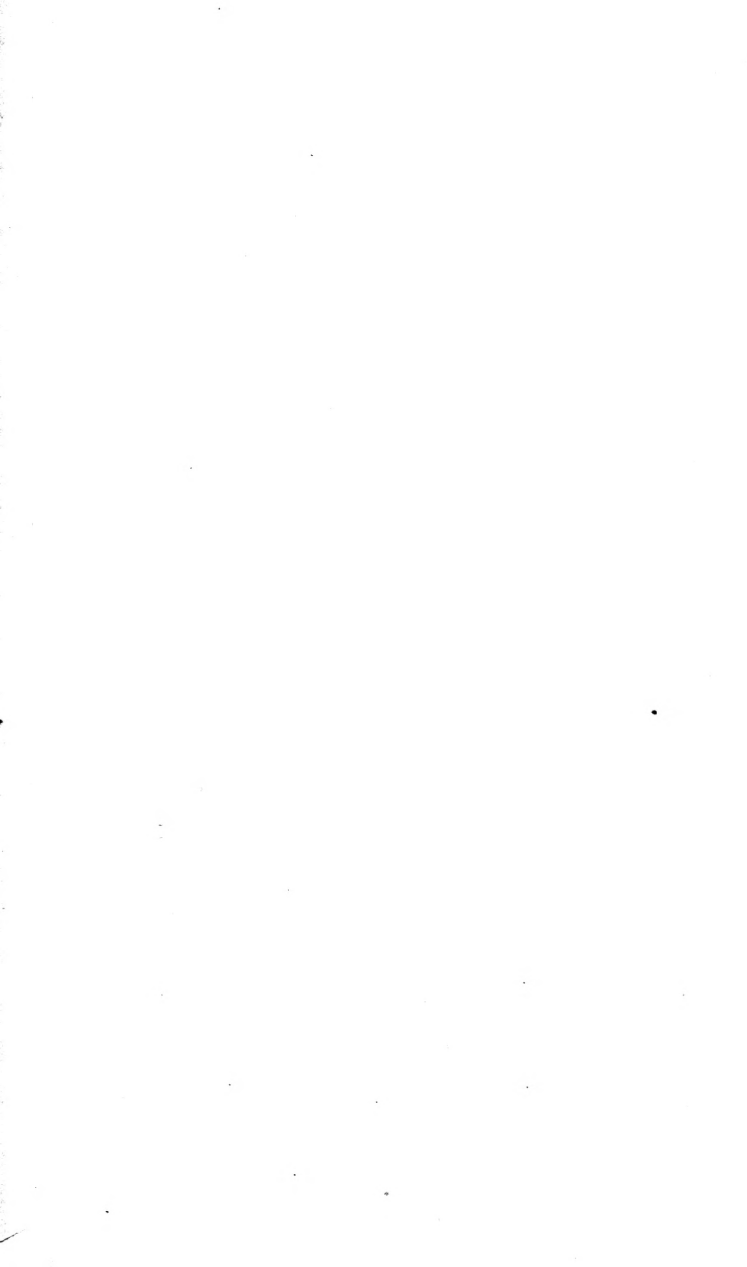
214, 215. Ambassadors to Rome. This was in 155 B.C. Milton's spelling is *embassadors*. They were sent to ask for the release of Athens from a fine imposed upon it by Rome, and their lectures to the Romans had great influence in introducing to Rome the Greek philosophies.

217. Cato the Censor, Marcus Portius Cato, or Cato Major. Cato was not Censor at the time of the embassy. He disliked everything Greek as tending to render the Romans effeminate.

217. moved it, brought forward as a motion.

218. Attic babblers. Athens, the chief city of Attica. Babbler is from Mid. Eng. *babelen* = to prate.

219. Scipio, the younger—*Publius Scipio Africanus*—the destroyer of Carthage. Scipio favoured the Greek customs, and was thus opposed to Cato.



Rome -
censored
libellous books
impious books
books permitted -
Epicurean
Satire
political

is this the place to
learn Roman history?

him and his old Sabine austerity; honoured and admired the men; and the censor himself at last in his old age fell to the study of that whereof before he was so scrupulous. And yet at the same time (Nævius and Plautus, the first Latin comedians, had filled the city with all the borrowed scenes of Menander and Philemon.) Then began to be considered there also what was to be done to libellous books and authors; for Nævius was quickly cast into prison for his unbridled pen, and released by the tribunes upon his recantation: We read also that libels were burnt, and the makers punished by Augustus. The like severity no doubt was used, if aught were impiously written against their esteemed gods. Except in these two points, how the world went in books, the magistrate kept no reckoning. And therefore (Lucretius) without impeachment versifies his Epicurism to Memmius, and had the honour to be set forth the second time by Cicero so great a father to the

220. Sabine. Shortly after the foundation of Rome, the men of Rome attacked the rival and adjacent City of Sabina, and carried off all their women. The two towns afterwards became friendly. Cato had a farm in the Sabine territory, and frequently went there to avoid the extravagant luxury of Rome. The Sabines had a reputation for homeliness and frugality.

221. in his old age. Cato is said to have begun the study of Greek at the age of 80.

222. scrupulous, scrupled so much against, found so much fault with.

223. Nævius and Plautus, two writers of Latin comedy; both flourished about the year 200 B.C. The former was imprisoned for using the same freedom of libel as the early Greek comedians.

225. Menander, Philemon writers of Greek comedy who flourished about 300 B.C.

228. the tribunes were magistrates of Rome elected to watch the interests of the plebeians. They were first elected 494 B.C.

229. Augustus, the first Roman Emperor, ruled from 30 B.C. to 14 A.D.

233. Lucretius, the Roman poet. The poem particularly referred to is *De Rerum Natura* (On the Nature of Things), and in it he follows and expresses the old philosophy of Epicurus, that virtue is the only happiness.

234. Memmius was praetor of Rome in B.C. 58, and the book of Lucretius was dedicated to him.

235. the second time. This does not seem to have been the case.

commonwealth; although himself disputes against that opinion in his own writings. Nor was the satirical sharpness or naked plainness of Lucilius, or Catullus, or Flaccus, by any order prohibited. And for matters of state the story of Titus Livius, 240 though it extolled that part which Pompey held, was not therefore suppressed by Octavius Cæsar of the other faction. But that Naso was by him banished in his old age for the wanton poems of his youth, was but a mere covert of state over some secret cause: and besides, the books were neither banished nor called in. From hence we shall meet with little else but tyranny in the Roman empire, that we may not marvel, if not so often bad, as good books were silenced. I shall therefore deem to have been large enough in producing what among the ancients was punishable to write, save only which, all other 250 arguments were free to treat on.

By this time the emperors were become Christians, whose

236. **himself**, he himself, *i.e.*, Cicero.

237. **satirical**. Milton spells it satyricall, wrongly supposing it to be derived from the Greek *satyros*.

237. **naked**, undisguised.

238. **Lucilius**, the founder of the classic school of Roman satirists. Died at Naples, 103 B.C.

238. **Catullus**, a Roman poet, 47 B.C.

238. **Flaccus**. Quintus Horatius Flaccus, better known to us as Horace, the best known of the Latin satirists, wrote during the reign of Augustus.

239. **story**, history.

239. **Titus Livius**, died 17 A.D. The well-known Roman historian Livy.

240. **Pompey**, at first the friend and then the rival of Julius Cæsar, who finally defeated him at Pharsalia, 48 B.C.

240. **held**, took.

241. **Octavius Cæsar**, the Augustus of line 229. His full title was Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus Augustus.

241. **faction**, party, not in the bad sense.

242. **Naso**, Publius Ovidius Naso, or Ovid, was banished by Augustus to Tomi on the Euxine or Black Sea in A.D. 9, and died there A.D. 18. The reason for the banishment is not known.

242. **in his old age**. Ovid was 52 when he was banished.

243. **covert**, pretext.

245. **From hence**, hence-forward.

248. **been large enough**, dealt at sufficient length.

248. **producing**, showing examples.

251. **emperors**. The first Christian emperor was Constantine, who reigned from A.D. 306 to A.D. 337.

discipline in this point I do not find to have been more severe than what was formerly in practice. The books of those whom they took to be grand heretics were examined, refuted, and condemned in the general Councils; and not till then were prohibited, or burnt, by authority of the emperor. As for the writings of heathen authors, unless they were plain invectives against Christianity, as those of Porphyrius and Proclus, they met with no interdict that can be cited till about the year 400, in a Carthaginian Council, wherein bishops themselves were 260 forbid to read the books of Gentiles, but heresies they might read: while others long before them on the contrary scrupled more the books of heretics than of Gentiles. And that the primitive Councils and Bishops were wont only to declare what books were not commendable, passing no further, but leaving it to each one's conscience to read or to lay by, till after the year 800, is observed already by Padre Paolo, the great unmasker of the Trentine Council. After which time the Popes of Rome, engrossing what they pleased of political rule into their own hands, extended their dominion over men's eyes, as they had 270

256. **authority.** Milton's spelling is *authority*.

258. **Porphyrius**, who flourished about the year A.D. 300, wrote a treatise against the Christian religion, which was publicly burnt by order of the Emperor Constantine.

258. **Proclus**, died A.D. 485.

259. **year 400.** The Carthaginian Council met in A.D. 398.

260, 261. **were forbid**; cf. l. 186.

262, 263. **scrupled more**, supply "concerning."

264. **primitive Councils**, the early Church Councils.

265. **passing, going.** Milton writes *further* for "further."

267. **Padre Paolo**, a Servite monk whose real name was Pietro Sarpi, died A.D. 1623. He defended the secular govern-

ment of Venice from papal interference, and wrote a history of the Council of Trent.

268. **the Trentine Council**; first held in 1545 and finally dissolved in 1563. Trent is in the Austrian Tyrol.

268. **After which time, i.e.**, after the year A.D. 800, when the Popes began to claim more and more secular power.

269. **engrossing**, taking in gross, seizing hold of all, monopolising.

270. **over men's eyes**; cf., the phrase "as it were in the eye" (l. 147). They took their dominion by forbidding men to see in books anything to which they objected. The Council of Trent formed two lists of books: those which must not be allowed at all, and those which could

before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the books not many which they so dealt with: till Martin the Fifth by his bull not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of heretical books; for about that time Wicklef and Huss growing terrible were they who first drove the Papal Court to a stricter policy of prohibiting. Which course Leo the Tenth and his successors followed, until the Council of Trent and the Spanish Inquisition engendering together brought forth or perfected those Catalogues and expurging indexes, that rake through the entrails of many an old good author with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb. Nor did they stay in matters heretical,

only be allowed after expurgation. The first list was called *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, the second *Index Expurgatorius*.

272. censures, judgments, here with a bad sense of fault-finding. *L. censeo* = I judge.

273, 274. Martin the Fifth was Pope from 1417 to 1431.

274. his bull. The commands of the Pope were called "bulls," from the *bullæ*, or seal, which was attached to them.

275. excommunicated, forbade, under pain of excommunication.

276. Wicklef and Huss. Wicklef or Wycliffe, the father of Reform, died 1384. The story of his work and of the Lollards whom he directed is part of English History. Wycliffe was favoured by Queen Anne of Bohemia, wife of Richard II., and it was through her influence that the reforming spirit spread to Bohemia and to Huss, the leader of the Bohemian Reformers. Huss was burnt at the stake in 1415. In England an Act *De heretico comburendo*,

"Concerning the burning of heretics," was passed in 1401, to suppress the growing Lollardism.

278. Leo the Tenth, Pope 1513—1521. Leo's Bull of 1515 required Bishops and Inquisitors to examine all books before they were printed, and to suppress heretical opinions.

279. Spanish Inquisition. Milton knew that his argument would be more acceptable through these references to the Popes and Spain. It was, however the Italian, and not the Spanish Inquisition which first introduced the *Index Expurgatorius*.

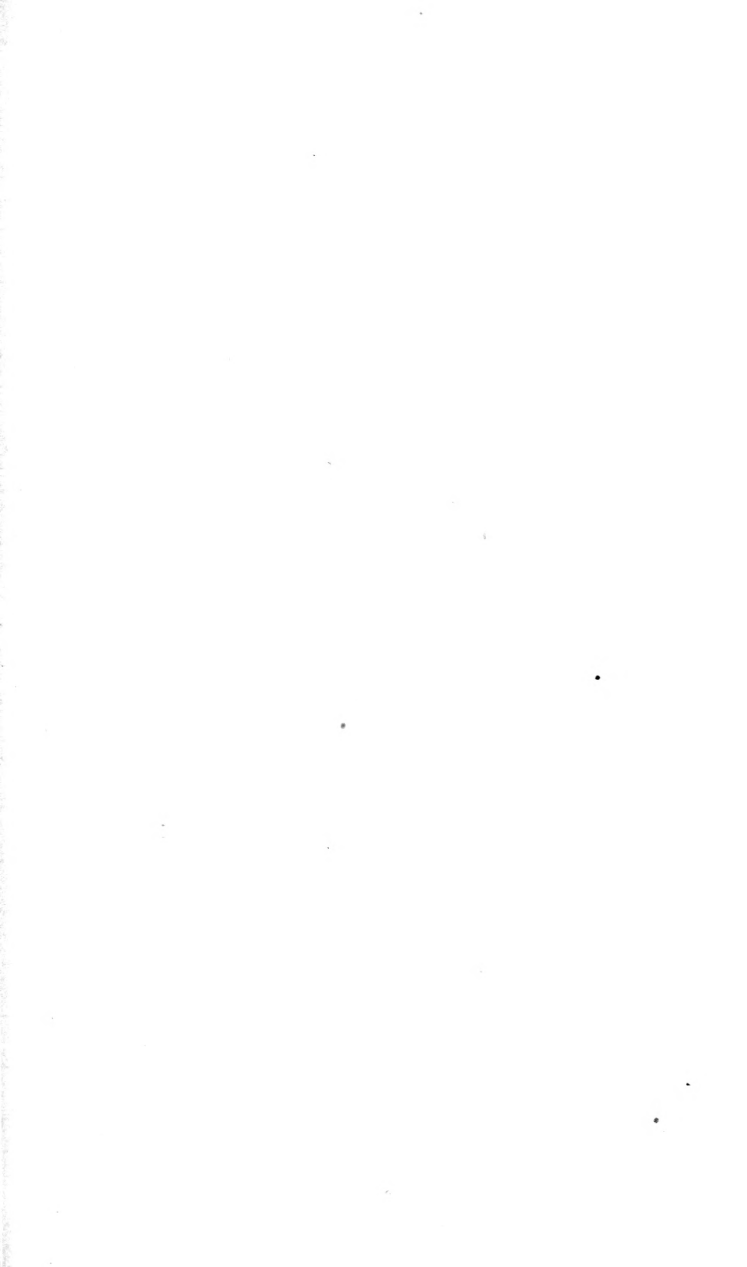
279. engendering, bringing forth. Old French *engendrér*, from Latin *ingenerare* = to generate.

280. Catalogues, the two indexes mentioned above.

281. expurging, modern form *expurgating*.

282. worse. Milton's spelling is *wors*.

283. did they stay in, did they limit themselves to.





but any subject that was not to their palate they either condemned in a prohibition, or had it straight into the new Purgatory of an Index. To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also out of Paradise), unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three glutton friars. For example:

Let the Chancellor Cini be pleased to see if in this present work be contained aught that may withstand the printing.

Vincent Rabbatta, Vicar of Florence.

I have seen this present work, and find nothing athwart the Catholic faith and good manners: In witness whereof I have given, &c.

Nicolò Cini, Chancellor of Florence.

Attending the precedent relation, it is allowed that this present work of Davanzati may be printed.

Vincent Rabbatta, &c.

It may be printed, July 15.

Friar Simon Mompei d'Amelia, Chancellor of the Holy Office in Florence.

285. condemned in a prohibition, *i. e.*, the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*.

286. Purgatory of an Index, the *Index Expurgatorius*.

289. keys of the press. Alluding of course to St. Peter as holding the keys of the Gates of Heaven, and to the claim of his successors to have power to pardon the sinner and so admit him into heaven.

291. glutton, gluttonous.

292. Cini. Pronounce *c* as *ch* before *e* and *i* in Italian words.

293, 294. withstand the printing, should not be printed.

296. athwart, opposed to.

Icelandic, *um thvert*, "on the cross."

297. Catholic, here means Roman Catholic.

297. good manners, good morals.

300. Attending the precedent relation, having considered the foregoing statement.

301. Davanzati. The book referred to is one on the Schism of the English Church, published at Florence in 1638, when Milton was in Italy. These courteous bows took place in 1636.

303. It may be printed. In Latin, *Imprimatur*, a word used by Milton later on.

Sure they have a conceit, if he of the bottomless pit had not long since broke prison, that this quadruple exorcism would bar him down. I fear their next design will be to get into their custody the licensing of that which they say Claudius intended, but went not through with. Vouchsafe to see another of their forms, the Roman stamp:

Imprimatur, If it seem good to the Reverend Master of the Holy Palace,

Belcastro, Viceregent.

Imprimatur,

Friar Nicolò Rodolphi, Master of the Holy Palace.

Sometimes five *Imprimaturs* are seen together dialogue-wise in the piazza of one title-page, complimenting and ducking each to other with their shaven reverences, whether the author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his epistle, shall to the

306. **conceit**, fancy. Cf. Note on l. 330.

307. **quadruple exorcism**, this four-fold ordeal. In modern English exorcism means rather to bring the evil spirit out than to bar him down. The literal meaning is "binding by oath." Exorcism is from Gr. *ex*=away, *orkos*=an oath.

309. **Claudius intended**. The Emperor Claudius at one time proposed to assume the power of allowing certain rude animal noises to be made in company. Milton's suggestion is, of course, a piece of somewhat coarse irony.

310. **Vouchsafe**. Milton's spelling is "voutsafe," and seems to have no warrant. To vouchsafe is to "warrant as safe."

311. **the Roman stamp**, an example of the Roman licensing. The previous example was from Florence. Latin, *Imprimatur* means "it may be printed."

317. **five Imprimaturs**. Blackwell says that in Spain six were required: those of—

- i. The Synodal Examiner.
- ii. The Recorder of the Kingdom.
- iii. The Vicar, attested by a notary.
- iv. His Majesty, countersigned by a secretary.
- v. The Corrector General.
- vi. The Lords of the Council.

318. **piazza**. Milton's spelling is *piatza*, in accordance with the Italian pronunciation. A *piazza* here means an open place.

318. **complimenting**. Milton has complementing, but complimenting is the evident sense.

318. **ducking**, lowering the head as a duck does in water, hence bowing.

319. **their shaven reverences**, an allusion to the monkish tonsure.

320. **at the foot**, i.e., with his signature at the end.

humor! —
oh! death!
God!

press or to the sponge. These are the pretty responsories, these are the dear antiphonies, that so bewitched of late our Prelates and their Chaplains with the goodly echo they made; and besotted us to the gay imitation of a lordly Imprimatur, one from Lambeth House, another from the west end of Paul's; so apishly romanising, that the word of command still was set down in Latin; as if the learned grammatical pen that wrote it would cast no ink without Latin; or perhaps, as they thought, because no vulgar tongue was worthy to express the pure conceit of an Imprimatur; but rather, as I hope, for that our English, the language of men ever famous and foremost in the achievements of liberty, will not easily find servile letters enow to spell such a dictatory presumption English. And thus ye have the inventors and the original of book-licensing ripped up and drawn as lineally as any pedigree. We have it not, that can be heard of, from any ancient state, or polity, or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors elder or later; nor

321. **the sponge**, *i.e.*, to have passages "sponged out" or expurgated, as Milton himself suffered later on in his *History of Britain*.

321. **responsories**, like the responses in the Prayer Book, spoken alternately by priest and congregation.

322. **antiphonies**, the full form of the modern word "anthem." Antiphonies were sung by two responsive choirs. Gr. *Anti*=contrary, *phone*=a voice.

322. **of late**, referring to the Star Chamber Decree of 1637.

325. **Lambeth House**, now called Lambeth Palace, the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

325. **west end of Paul's**, where the Bishop of London had a palace. These two dignitaries were appointed by the Star Chamber as licensers of all books except those on law,

state affairs, or heraldry. An Act of Charles II.'s reign, in 1673, added fairy tales and books of love to their list.

326. **word of command**, "Imprimatur."

326. **still**, always.

329. **vulgar**, common, as opposed to classical. *L. vulgus* = the common herd.

330. **conceit**, opinion; a doublet of concept.

330. **for that**, because.

332. **enow**, used as the plural of "enough," now obsolete.

333. **English**, in the English manner.

334. **ripped up**, exposed.

337. **any statute**. According to Selden, speaking in Parliament in 1628, "there is no law to prevent the printing of any books in England, only a decree in Star Chamber." — HOLT WHITE.

337. **ancestors**, predecessors.

from the modern custom of any reformed city or church abroad :
 340 but from the most anti-christian council and the most tyrannous
 inquisition that ever inquired. Till then books were ever as
 freely admitted into the world as any other birth ; the issue of
 the brain was no more stifled than the issue of the womb ! no
 envious Juno sat cross-legged over the nativity of any man's
 intellectual offspring ; but if it proved a monster, who denies
 but that it was justly burnt, or sunk into the sea. But that a
 book, in worse condition than a peccant soul, should be to stand
 before a jury ere it be born to the world, and undergo yet in
 darkness the judgment of Rhadamanth and his colleagues, ere
 it can pass the ferry backward into light, was never heard
 850 before, till that mysterious Iniquity, provoked and troubled at
 the first entrance of Reformation, sought out new limbos and
 new hells wherein they might include our books also within the

339. **anti-christian council**, the Trentine Council.

339, 340. **tyrannous inquisition**, the Spanish Inquisition ; cf. l. 279 : "The Council of Trent and the Spanish Inquisition engendering together."

341. **birth**, thing born.

342, 343. **no envious Juno sat cross-legged**. An allusion to the story of the birth of Hercules. Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, called for help, but the helper, pledged by Juno to retard, sat cross-legged outside the door muttering spells.

343. **nativity**, birth.

346. **peccant**, sinful.

346. **should be to**, should be compelled to, should have to.

347, 348. **yet in darkness**, i.e., unpublished.

348. **Rhadamanth**. Milton's spelling is Radamanth. According to the Greek myth, Rhadamanthus was one of the three judges of Hades. His colleagues were Minos and Aiakos.

349. **the ferry**. The ferry over the Styx, which Charon and his dog Cerberus guarded.

350. **that mysterious Iniquity**, the Papacy. "Upon her forehead was a name written, *mystery*, Babylon the Great."—Rev. xvii. 5. The Puritan identified the Papacy with the Scarlet Woman of Babylon.—HALES.

351. **Reformation**. An allusion to the early reformers—Wycliffe and Huss.

351. **new limbos**. A limbo was the borderland of Hell, and the limbos were supposed to be somewhere near the centre of the earth. The schoolmen of the Middle Ages supposed that, besides Hell and Purgatory, there was (1) a *limbus puerorum* for the souls of infants dying unbaptised ; (2) *limbus patrum* for the patriarchs who lived before Christ. Milton compares the two Indexes to these limbos.

The only one
book was the one
for the first time



number of their damned. And this was the rare morsel so officiously snatched up, and so ill-favouredly imitated by our inquisiturient Bishops and the attendant Minorites—their Chaplains. That ye like not now these most certain authors of this licensing order, and that all sinister intention was far distant from your thoughts, when ye were importuned the passing it, all men who know the integrity of your actions and how ye honour Truth, will clear ye readily.

360

—But some will say, What though the inventors were bad, the thing for all that may be good? It may be so; yet if that thing be no such deep invention, but obvious, and easy for any man to light on, and yet best and wisest commonwealths through all ages and occasions have forborne to use it, and falsest seducers and oppressors of men were the first who took it up, and to no other purpose but to obstruct and hinder the first approach of Reformation; I am of those who believe it will be a harder alchemy than Lullius ever knew, to sublimate any good use out of such an invention. Yet 370 this is only what I request to gain from this reason, that it may be held a dangerous and suspicious fruit, as certainly

354. **ill-favouredly**, unhand-somely.

355. **inquisiturient**. The termination "urient" signifies "greatly desiring," "intensely fond of."

355. **Minorites**, friars; strictly applied to the Franciscan monks only.

356. **these most certain authors**, i.e., these who were most certainly the authors.

358, 359. **importuned the passing**, importuned to pass.

364. **to light on**, to discover easily, to find without effort.

367. **to no other purpose**. We now write "for no other purpose."

368. **of those**, i.e., one of those.

369. **alchemy**. The alchemists claimed to have the power of changing the baser metals into gold. Readers of Ben Jonson's *Alchemist* will know their methods. Raymond Lully, or Lullius, a famous writer on chemistry and medicine, and on occult science, was stoned to death in 1315. Arabic *al*=the; *Kimia*, which is derived from the Greek *chemia*=chemistry.

370. **sublimate**. To sublimate is to heat off a solid and condense the vapour. This was one of the processes of the alchemist.

it deserves, for the tree that bore it, until I can dissect one by one the properties it has. But I have first to finish, as was propounded, what is to be thought in general of reading books, whatever sort they be, and whether be more the benefit or the harm that thence proceeds?

Not to insist upon the examples of Moses, Daniel and Paul, who were skilful in all the learning of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Greeks, which could not probably be without reading their books of all sorts—in Paul especially, who thought it no defilement to insert into Holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek poets, and one of them a tragedian—the question was notwithstanding sometimes controverted among the primitive doctors, but with great odds on that side which affirmed it both lawful and profitable, as was then evidently perceived, when Julian the Apostate, and subtlest enemy to our faith, made a decree forbidding Christians the study of heathen learning: for, said he, they wound us with our own weapons, and with our own arts and sciences they overcome us. And indeed the Christians were put so to their shifts by this crafty means, and so much in danger to decline into all

373. for the tree. We now write "from the tree."

378. Moses.

"Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."
—ACTS VII., 22.

378. Daniel.

"God gave them (the four children) knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams."
—DANIEL I. 7.

379. Paul. See note on l. 383. Milton's object in bringing this not very strong argument has been mentioned in the Chapter on "Style and Argument."

283. three Greek poets. These are:—

Aratus, or Cleanthes, in Acts xvii. 28.

Euripides, in Cor. xv. 33.

Epimenides in Titus i. 12.

Grotius, however, thinks that the second comes from Menander.

383. a tragedian, Euripides.

335. primitive doctors, the early Fathers of the Church.

385. odds, advantage.

387. Julian the Apostate. Gibbon says that by Julian's edict the Christians were directly forbidden to teach, and, since they would not frequent the schools of the Pagan, they were indirectly forbidden to learn. The Emperor Julian, who forsook the Christian tenets, and was hence called the Apostate, died in A.D. 363.

391. to their shifts, to a loss, in difficulties.

392. to decline, modern English "of declining."

Reading is General -

1. To prove all things are pure
Moses, Daniel Paul

1. Skilled in all learning.
2. Doctors affirmed it lawful
and profitable
3. Julian realized advantage
forbade Christians to read
pagan learning - wound pagans
with their own weapons

4. Got injury to deprive church
of Hellenic learning -

ignorance, that the two Apollinarii were fain, as a man may say, to coin all the seven liberal sciences out of the Bible, reducing it into divers forms of orations, poems, dialogues, even to the calculating of a new Christian grammar. But, saith the historian Socrates: The Providence of God provided better than the industry of Apollinarius and his son, by taking away that illiterate law with the life of him who devised it. So great an injury they then held it to be deprived of Hellenic learning; and thought it a persecution more undermining, and secretly decaying the Church, than the open cruelty of Decius or Diocletian. And perhaps it was the same politic drift that the devil whipped St. Jerome in a lenten dream for reading Cicero; or else it was a phantasm bred by the fever which had then seized him. For had an angel been his discipliner, unless

393. the two Apollinarii. Apollinarius, Bishop of Alexandria and his father. They produced a sacred history after the style of Homer in 24 books, and imitations of the Greek poets.

393. fain, glad. A.S. *fægen*.

394. the seven liberal sciences, the Trivium:—Grammar, Dialogue, Rhetoric; the Quadrivium:—Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy.

397. the historian Socrates, not the great Socrates, but the fifth century writer of an Ecclesiastical History.

399. illiterate, because tending to make the Christians illiterate.

399. him, Julian the Apostate.

400. Hellenic, Greek.

400-403. Milton seems here to follow Bacon, who wrote:—

"The edict of the Emperor Julian was esteemed and accounted a more pernicious engine and machination against the Christian Church than were all the sanguinary prosecutions of his predecessors."—Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*.

402. Decius, Emperor of Rome, A.D. 249—251.

403. Diocletian, Emperor of Rome, A.D. 284—305. Both these Emperors severely persecuted the Christians.

403. was the same, was (for) the same.

403. politic drift, politic intention.

404 *et seq.* the devil, etc. Milton's spelling in this passage is interesting:—Divell, whipt, fantasm, feaver, seis'd.

404. St. Jerome, died A.D. 420.

404. lenten dream. This dream occurred to St. Jerome in the middle of Lent, when he was so weak through fasting, frequent vigils, and tears as to be in a state of fear. The "antiquus serpens" approached him and accused him of being a Ciceronian and not a Christian.

The dream was described in a letter written in A.D. 384 to the nun Eustochium to prevent her from reading the classic authors.

it were for dwelling too much upon Ciceronianisms, and had chastised the reading, not the vanity, it had been plainly partial; *first*, to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for
 410 (scurril Plautus, whom he confesses to have been reading not long before; *next*, to correct him only, and let so many more ancient fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil teaches how some good use may be made of *Margites*, a (sportful) poem, not now extant, writ by Homer; and why not then of *Morgante*, an Italian romance much to the same purpose? But if it be agreed we shall be tried by visions, there is a vision recorded by (Eusebius, far (ancienter) than this tale of Jerome to the nun Eustochium, and, besides, has)
 420 nothing of a fever in it. Dionysius Alexandrinus) was about

407. dwelling . . . Ciceronianisms. Studying the beauties and peculiarities of Cicero in order to make more perfect his Latin style. This Milton calls "vanity."

408. had been, conditional mood.

410. scurril Plautus. We should now write "scurrilous," which Milton also uses. The form "scurril" is perhaps used to avoid the repetition of the "us." For Plautus, see note to l. 223.

410, 411. not long before. As Jerome confesses in the letter. *Plautus sumebatur in manus.* = "Plautus was taken into my hands."

411. so many more. The study of the classic authors was a favourite one with all the Fathers of the Church, e.g., Basil, mentioned in l. 414, and St. Augustine.

412. wax, A.S. *wacsian* = to grow.

414. Basil, Bishop of Caesarea, A.D. 370—379.

414. *Margites*. Not now extant, is attributed to Homer on doubtful grounds. Four lines of it are quoted in Plato and Aristotle.

415. sportful, wanton, improper.

415. writ, written; cf. l. 549.

416. *Morgante*. *Il Morgante Maggiore*, a burlesque and satirical poem, was written by Luigi Pulci, in 1488.


418. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, A.D. 315—338. He wrote an Ecclesiastical History in ten volumes.

418. ancienter, notice the form.

419. and besides, has, and (which) besides, has. An example of Milton's likings for elliptical expressions. The date of Jerome's dream was A.D. 384. Eusebius died A.D. 338. "Far ancienter" (l. 418) seems therefore a slight exaggeration.

420. Dionysius Alexandrinus. Dionysius was Bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 247—265.

nothing

Situation Milton writes
about is concerning
Rosen 1972-70 w/
television. 

the year 240 a person of great name in the church for piety and learning, who had wont to avail himself much against heretics by being conversant in their books; until a certain presbyter laid it scrupulously to his conscience, how he durst venture himself among those defiling volumes. The worthy man, loth to give offence, fell into a new debate with himself what was to be thought; when suddenly a vision sent from God—it is his own epistle that so avers it—confirmed him in these words: “Read any books whatever come to thy hands, for thou art sufficient both to judge aright and to examine each matter.” To this revelation he assented the sooner, as he confesses, because it was answerable to that of the Apostle to the Thessalonians: “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” And he might have added another remarkable saying of the same author: “To the pure all things are pure;” not only meats and drinks, but all kinds of knowledge whether of good or evil; the knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defiled. For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evil substance; and yet God in that unapocryphal vision said without exception, “Rise, Peter, kill and eat,” leaving the choice to each man’s discretion. Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unapplicable to occasions of evil. Bad meats

421. name, reputation.

422. had wont, was accustomed. Wont from A.S. *wunian* = to be accustomed.

422. to avail himself, to strengthen his arguments.

423. conversant, well versed.

424. presbyter, elder in the Church, priest; from Greek *presbyteros* = elder.

424. scrupulously, as a matter of scruple.

432. answerable to, in accordance with.

433. Thessalonians.

I. THESSALONIANS V. 21.

433. Prove, try. Cf. “The exception proves (tries) the rule.”

435, 436. To the pure, etc. Titus I. 15.

439. be not defiled, i.e., before reading.

441. unapocryphal, Acts X. 9-16.

441. without exception, i.e., making no distinction between clean and unclean.

will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction; but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn and to illustrate.

- 450 Whereof what better witness can ye expect I should produce, than one of your own now sitting in Parliament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. Selden, whose volume of natural and national law, proves, not only by great authorities brought together, but by exquisite reasons and theorems almost mathematically demonstrative, that all opinions, yea errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service and assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest. (I conceive, therefore, that when God did enlarge the universal diet) of man's body, saving ever
- 460 the rules of temperance, He then also, as before, left arbitrary the dieting and repasting of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his own leading capacity.)
- How great a virtue is temperance! How much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanour of every grown man. And therefore when He

446, 447. **concoction.** Milton uses the word "concoct" to denote the process of eating. "Concoction" would therefore seem to be best taken as meaning stomach, or digestion.

453. **Mr. Selden** sat in the Long Parliament for Oxford. The book referred to is *De jure Naturali et Gentium juxta disciplinam Hebræorum*. "Of natural law and (the law) of nations according to the methods of the Hebrews." It was published in 1640.

455. **exquisite** (Lat. *ex*=out, *quæro*=I search) is used by Milton in its original sense of "carefully sought out."

457. **collated**, compared with one another.

459. **enlarge the universal diet**, i.e., made man omnivorous.

"But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her temperance over appetite."

—*Paradise Lost*, VII. 126.

459. **saving ever**, reserving always, and therefore restricting by.

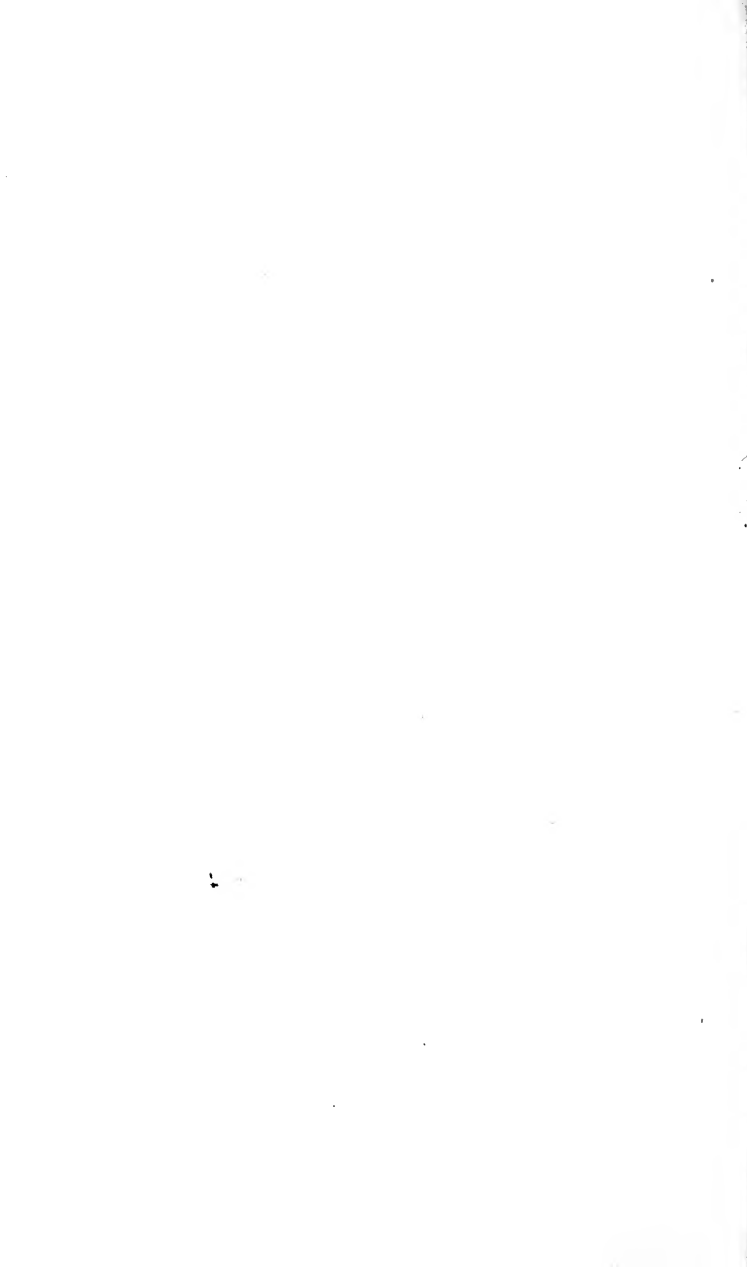
460. **arbitrary**, a matter of judgment; Lat. *arbiter* = an umpire.

461. **repasting**, feeding. "Repast" is only used now as a substantive.

462. **leading capacity**, i.e., special talent.

466. **demeanour**, *caro*.

Knowledge of errors gives knowledge of truth -
tr



309

Himself tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer, which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might have well sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man, rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser; (there were) but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation. (Solomon informs us that much reading is a weariness to the flesh; but neither he nor other inspired author tells us that such or such reading is unlawful: yet certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had been much more expedient to have told us what was unlawful, than what was wearisome. As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. Paul's converts, 'tis replied the books were magic, the Syriac so renders them. It was a private act, a voluntary act, and leaves us to a voluntary imitation: the men in remorse burnt those books which were their own; the magistrate by this example is not appointed: these men practised the books, another might perhaps have read them in some sort usefully. Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly

467. tabled the Jews, supplied the tables of the Jews with food. See Exodus xvi.

467. omer, about three and a half quarts.

470. those actions. Matthew xv. 17-20.

471. issue. Norman-French *issue*, from Lat. *ex*=out, and *itum*=to go. Issue and exit are, therefore, doublets.

474. there were, there would be. Notice the conditional use.

476, 477. Solomon informs. See Eccles. xii. 12.

478. nor other, nor any other. 482. Ephesian books.

"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together and burned them before all men."—Acts xix. 19.

486. is not appointed, i.e., is not directed to deal with it.

487. practised the books, i.e., practised what the books taught.

to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche as an incessant labour to cull out, and sort asunder, were not more intermixed. It was from out the rind of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is that doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil, that is to say of knowing good by evil. As therefore the state of man now is, what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear without the knowledge of evil? [He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring Christian.] I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run

central idea

492, 493. **those confused seeds . . . Psyche.** The reference is to the story of Cupid and Psyche as told by Apuleius in his "Golden Ass." Psyche drew upon herself the wrath of Venus for having won the love of her son Cupid. Venus flew upon her, tore her garments into shreds, pulled out her hair, and shook her by the head; then took the seeds of wheat, barley, millet, poppy, vetches, lentils and beans, and, mixing them up into one confused heap, ordered Psyche to sort them out before evening. The fable relates that the task was performed for her by the friendly aid of some ants.

493. **cull out**, pick out; Fr. *cueillir* = to gather.

493, 494. **sort asunder**, arrange in their proper kinds.

495. **apple tasted**; one of Milton's inversions.

495, 496. **two twins**; a pleonasm or redundancy.

"Twin" is from A.S. *twægen* = two.

497. **doom**, judgment, penalty; A.S. *deman* = to judge.

499. **now is**, i.e., under this Licensing Ordinance.

500. **continence to forbear**, continence in forbearing.

501. **her**. See chapter on Language, on the absence of "its."

503. **wayfaring**. The original of 1644 has *warfaring*, but this, according to Holt White, was a correction made by the proof reader, and not by Milton, who wrote "wayfaring," as opposed to "cloistered," in the next line. *Faring*, A.S. *faran* = to go.

504. **fugitive**, i.e., fleeing from temptation.

504. **cloistered**; Fr. *cloître*, from L. *claustrum* = a shutting up.

505. **sallies**; from the Latin *salio* = I leap.

506. **that immortal garland**, the crown of immortal life.

General Reading

3. Fugitive and Clattered or
valueless

Must meet adversary

morize.

1. Necessary to survey vice and
have knowledge of vice to
construct virtue
2. Scan error to confirm truth
3. Hear all manner of reason

for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of 510 evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure; her whiteness is but an excremental whiteness; which was the reason why our sage and serious poet (Spenser, whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus) or Aquinas, describing true temperance under the person of Guion, brings him in with his (Palmer) through the Cave of Mammon and the Bower of Earthly Bliss, that he might see and know, and yet abstain. Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the 520 constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely and with less danger scout into the regions of sin and falsity than by reading all manner of tractates and hearing all manner of reason? And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read. But of the harm that may result hence three kinds are usually reckoned :

510. **is but a youngling, i.e.,** is as a child.

512. **rejects it,** from ignorance and not from knowledge.

512. **blank,** empty.

513. **excremental,** outside, surface, not thorough.

514. **Spenser.** Milton was a great admirer of the poet Spenser. The passages referred to here are from the *Faery Queene*, Book II., Cantos 7 and 12.

515. **Scotus.** John Duns Scotus died at Cologne A.D. 1308.

516. **Aquinas.** Thomas Aquinas died 1274. The two were the most famous of the schoolmen, or weavers of subtle sophistry, during the Middle

Ages. The second name of the former is the origin of our word Dunce, but Scotus was by no means a dunce. Pope used the name as the title for his *Dunciad*.

517. **Palmer,** one who wore a palm branch as a sign that he had made the journey to the Holy Land. The "palmer" accompanied Guion through the Bower of Earthly Bliss, but not through the Cave of Mammon.

523. **scout into,** search out into, as in the military sense. Fr. *escouter*, from L. *auscultare*.

524. **tractates,** a doublet of treatises.

525. **had of.** derived from

✓
530 First, is feared the infection that may spread; but then all human learning and controversy in religious points must remove out of the world, yea the Bible itself; for that oftentimes relates blasphemy (not nicely), it describes the carnal sense of wicked men not unelegantly, it brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against Providence through all the arguments of (Epicurus): in other great disputes it answers dubiously and darkly to the common reader: And ask a Talmudist what ails the modesty of his marginal Keri, that Moses and all the Prophets cannot persuade him to pronounce the textual Chetiv.) For these causes we all know the Bible itself put by the Papist into the first rank of prohibited books.
540 The ancientes fathers must be next removed, as Clement of

531. not nicely, not disguisedly, openly.

531. carnal sense, fleshly longings; L. *caro, carnis* = flesh.

532. not unelegantly, in elegant language. Cf. "The Song of Solomon."

533. passionately murmuring, as in the Book of Job.

533, 534. through all the arguments, etc., i.e., using arguments similar to those of Epicurus.

534. Epicurus. See note to l. 183 and "Historical Notes."

536. Talmudist. The Talmuds are two in number—the Babylonian and the Hebrew. They are commentaries on the Hebrew Scripture. Milton himself explains in his Apology for Smectymnuus:—

"God, who is the author both of Purity and Eloquence, chose this phrase as fittest in that vehement character wherein he spake. Otherwise, that plain word might have easily been forborne: which the Masorites and Rabbinical scholiasts not well attending have often used to blur the margin with Keri instead of Ketiv, and gave us this rule out

of their Talmud, that all words which in the law are writ unseemly must be changed to more civil words."

The text of the Scripture itself is called, in Hebrew, the Ketiv. What is read is called the Keri. Milton wrote Chetiv instead of Ketiv, in accordance with the pronunciation of the German Jews (Holt White). The word "Talmud" itself means doctrine.

536. what ails the modesty, etc., What is the fault to find with the Chetiv, or the actual words, that they will not read them?

538. textual Chetiv, i.e., actual words of the text. Milton calls these scholiasts:—

"Fools who would teach men to read more decently than God thought fit to write."

—Apology to Smectymnuus.

540. ancientest; another superlative strange to our ears.

540, 541. Clement of Alexandria, a presbyter of the church in Alexandria about 200 A.D., and the writer of several ecclesiastical works.

as harm from General Reading
Infection may spread.

harm propagated without book
By teaching Sp. 35

Alexandria,) and that Eusebian book) of Evangelic preparation, transmitting our ears through a hoard of heathenish obscenities to receive the Gospel. Who finds not that Irenæus, Epiphanius, Jerome,) and others (discover) more heresies than they well confute, and that oft for heresy which is the truer opinion? Nor boots it to say for these, and all the heathen writers of greatest infection,) if it must be thought so, with whom (is bound up) the life of human learning, that they writ in an unknown tongue, so long as we are sure those languages are known as well to the worst of men, who are 550 both most able and most diligent to instil the poison they suck, first into the courts of princes, acquainting them with the choicest delights and criticisms of sin. As perhaps did that Petronius whom Nero called his Arbiter, the master of his revels; and the notorious ribald of Arezzo, dreaded and yet

541. **Eusebian book**, i.e., book written by Eusebius, called the *Evangelical Preparation*. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, died about A.D. 340. Andrew Lang writes to him in his *Letters to Dead Authors*.

542. **transmitting our ears**, preparing our ears by passing.

543. **Irenæus**, Bishop of Lyons about the year A.D. 200.

544. **Epiphanius**, lived about A.D. 350.

544. **Jerome**. See note to l. 401.

544. **discover**, in Milton's time meant uncover. Dis = away, apart.

546. **boots it**, is it of advantage? A.S. *bot* = advantage.

547. **writers of greatest infection**, i.e., whose writings are most likely to infect.

548. **is bound up**, is found, is wrapped up.

549. **writ**, for wrote, as usual.

552. **acquainting them**,

making them acquainted, or familiar with.

553. **criticisms**, choice selections, as the results of the choice of a writer selecting critically.

554. **that**. Here used as an epithet of reproach, like the Latin "iste."

554. **Petronius**, the "Arbiter Elegantiæ" or "Judge of fine taste." Petronius died in A.D. 66.

554, 555. **master of his revels**, the one in charge of the court revels. There was also a Master of the Revels at the court of the Stuarts, who had the arrangement of the court masques and festivals.

555. **the notorious ribald of Arezzo**, Pietro Aretino, a writer of pungent but loose satires, who died A.D. 1557; *ribald* is from Fr. *ribaud*, It. *ribaldo*.

555, 556. **dreaded and yet dear**, *dreaded* by those he satirised, *dear* to the others who enjoyed the satires.

dear to the Italian courtiers. I name not him for posterity's sake, whom Harry the Eighth named in merriment his Vicar of Hell.) By which compendious way all the contagion that foreign books can infuse will find a passage to the people far easier and shorter than an Indian voyage, though it could be sailed either by the north of Cataio eastward, or of Canada westward, while our Spanish licensing gags the English press never so severely. But on the other side, that infection which is from books of controversy in religion is more doubtful and dangerous to the learned than to the ignorant; and yet those books must be permitted untouched by the licenser. (It will be hard to instance where any ignorant man hath been ever seduced by papistical book in English, unless it were commended and expounded to him by some of that clergy: and indeed all such tractates, whether false or true, are as the prophecy of Isaiah was to the eunuch, not to be *understood without a guide*. But of our priests and doctors how many have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonnists, and how

566, 567. for posterity's sake, i.e., for the sake of his posterity.

557, 558. Vicar of Hell. These words make the reference appear to be to the poet Skelton, who was Rector of Diss in Norfolk. The Latin word *Dis* was another name for Pluto, the god of the infernal regions. The intention is to parody the Pope's title of "Christ's Vicar upon Earth."

558. compendious, long, but clear.

560. Indian voyage. Although the route to India *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope had been discovered by Vasco da Gama in 1492, attempts were made to find a shorter route, either by a north-western passage *viâ* America or a north-eastern *viâ* North Asia and China.

561. Cataio, Cathay, was the ancient name of the northern division of China.

562. Spanish licensing, as being the progeny of the Spanish Inquisition.

563. never so, a favourite expression of the time, equal to "however." Cf. "Charming never so wisely" (Ps. lviii. 5).

564. doubtful, full of doubt, causing more doubt.

569. that clergy, i.e., the Roman Catholic clergy.

570, 571. prophecy of Isaiah. A reference to the story of Philip and the eunuch (Acts viii. 30).

573. Jesuits and Sorbonnists. The Society of Jesus was founded by Ignatius Loyola, who became its first "general" by a Papal bull in 1540 A.D. Its members took vows of poverty,

11

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The first of the
the first of the
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fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad. It is not forgot, since the acute and distinct Arminius was perverted merely by the perusing of a nameless discourse written at Delft, which at first he took in hand to confute. Seeing therefore that those books, and those in great abundance which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppressed without the fall of learning and of all ability in disputation, and that these books of either sort are most and soonest catching to the learned, from whom to the common people whatever is heretical or dissolute may quickly be conveyed, and that evil manners are as perfectly learnt without books a thousand other ways which cannot be stopped, and evil doctrine (not with books can propagate), except a teacher guide, which he might also do without writing, and so beyond prohibiting, I am not able to unfold how this cautelous enterprise of licensing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleasantly disposed could not well avoid to liken it to the

580

590

chastity and implicit obedience. The last was their principal characteristic, and by its means the Brotherhood became a formidable agent of the Romish Church. Their code of morality allowed interest and external circumstances to determine their conduct. The Society was abolished in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV., but was reconstituted in 1814. They conduct schools at Stonyhurst and other places in England.

The Sorbonne was originally the theological school of Paris, the name afterwards being extended to the whole university. Its professors were learned and active expounders of the Roman Catholic tenets, and actively opposed to the Protestants.

575. **both late and sad.** Referring to the influence of Laud and the prelates.

575. **forgot**, forgotten, like *writ* for *written* in l. 415.

576. **distinct**, clearly reasoning.

576. **Arminius**, died 1609. He undertook to confute a work on Predestination (published at Delft), but was himself converted to its principles on reading it, and extended its teachings.

577. **nameless**, anonymous.

586. **not with books can propagate**, cannot spread, even with the best of books.

588. **so beyond prohibiting**, so be beyond the power of being prohibited.

589. **cautelous**, over suspicious: Lat. *cautela*

exploit of that gallant man who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park gate. Besides another inconvenience, if learned men be the first receivers out of books and dispreaders) both of vice and error, how shall the licensers themselves be confided in, unless we can confer upon them, or they assume to themselves above all others in the land, the grace of infallibility and (uncorruptedness.) And again, if it be true that a wise man like a good refiner can gather gold out of the drossiest 600 volume, and that a fool will be a fool with the best book, yea, or without book, there is no reason that we should deprive a wise man of any advantage to his wisdom, while we seek to restrain from a fool that which being restrained will be no hindrance to his folly. For if there should be so much exactness always used to keep that from him which is unfit for his reading, we should in the judgment of Aristotle not only, but of Solomon and of our Saviour, not vouchsafe him good precepts, and by consequence not willingly admit him to good books, as being certain that a wise man will make better use of an idle 610 pamphlet than a fool will do of sacred Scripture.

'Tis next alleged we must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and next to that, not employ our time in vain things. To both these objections one answer will serve, out of the grounds already laid, that to all men such books are not temptations, nor vanities, but useful drugs and materials wherewith to temper and compose effective and strong medicines, which man's life cannot want. The rest, as children and childish men, who have not the art to qualify and

592. pound up; A.S. *pyndan* = to enclose.

594. dispreaders, spreaders abroad.

598. uncorruptedness. We now correct this hybrid into incorruptibility.

606. Aristotle, the famous logician of the Greeks and the

tutor of Alexander the Great. See "Historical Notes."

606. not only, in modern construction would precede "of Aristotle."

616. temper, modify.

617. want, do without.

618. qualify, to read with qualifications, or with judgment.

of evil, spread by books.
how can licenses be trusted

this man obtains gold from dr

don't expose oneself to temptation
without necessity

the

Licensing avails nothing

prepare these working minerals,) well may be exhorted to forbear, but hindered forcibly they cannot be by all the licensing that Sainted Inquisition could ever yet contrive; which is what I promised to deliver next: That this order of licensing conduces nothing to the end for which it was framed; and hath almost prevented me by being clear already while thus much hath been explaining. See the ingenuity of Truth, who, when she gets a free and willing hand, opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse can overtake her. It was the task which I began with, To show that no nation, or well instituted state, if they valued books at all, did ever use this way of licensing; and it might be answered, that this is a piece of prudence lately discovered. To which I return, that as it was a thing slight and obvious to think on, so if it had been difficult to find out, there wanted not among them long since, (who suggested such a course; which they not following, leave us a pattern of their judgment, that it was not the not knowing, but the not approving, which was the cause of their not using it. (Plato,) a man of high authority, indeed, but least of all for his *Commonwealth*, in the Book of his Laws, which no city ever yet received, fed his fancy with making many edicts to his airy burgomasters, which they who otherwise admire him wish had been rather buried and excused in the genial cups of

619. **working minerals;** so called, as containing good metal mixed with dross.

624. **prevented,** preceded, anticipated; Lat. *pre*=before, *venio*=I come. Cf. "Thy special grace preventing us."—Prayer Book (Collect for Easter Day).

625. **been explaining,** been in course of explanation. "Explaining" is a gerund.

625. **ingenuity,** ingenuousness, openness; not in its modern meaning of "skill."

634. **who suggested,** who

would have suggested.

637. **Plato,** the famous Greek writer. Author of *The Republic*, *Phaedo*, *De Legibus*, etc. The pupil and follower of Socrates. See Historical Notes.

637. **high authority,** great reputation.

639. **ever yet received,** ever attempted to follow, *i.e.*, as a guide.

639. **with,** by.

640. **airy,** imagined, the creatures of his imagination.

640. **burgomasters,** mayors, like the German burgomasters.

an Academic night sitting. By which laws he seems to tolerate no kind of learning, but by unalterable decree, consisting most of practical traditions, to the attainment whereof a library of smaller bulk than his own dialogues would be abundant. And there also enacts, that no poet should so much as read to any private man what he had written, until the judges and law-keepers had seen it and allowed it: But that Plato meant this law peculiarly to that commonwealth which he had imagined, and to no other, is evident. Why was he not else a lawgiver to himself, but a transgressor, and to be expelled by his own magistrates, both for the wanton epigrams and dialogues which he made, and his perpetual reading of Sophron Mimus and Aristophanes, books of grossest infamy, and also for commending the latter of them—though he were the malicious libeller of his chief friends—to be read by the tyrant Dionysius, who had little need of such trash to spend his time on, but that he knew

642. **Academic.** The Academy was one of the famous groves of Athens, where Plato had a residence, and where he feasted the wits and philosophers of Athens.

643. **but by,** except that fixed by.

645, 646. **And there also,** and there he also.

648. **allowed,** approved.

651. **to be expelled,** deserving of expulsion. A Latinism.

652. **wanton epigrams and dialogues.** These terms are too strong for any of Plato's dialogues, though the *Phædo* is probably meant. Milton's puritanical training makes him severe both on Plato, Sophron and Aristophanes.

653. **Sophron Mimus.** Sophron, the writer of *Mimus*, wrote about B.C. 400.

"The mimes of Sophron were of such reckoning with Plato as

to take them nightly to read on, and after make them his pillow."—MILTON'S *Apology for Smectymnus*.

Few fragments of these mimes remain, and Milton seems, without foundation, to have classed them with the licentious Roman mimes.

653. **Aristophanes.** See the note to l. 187 and also the "Historical Notes."

655, 656. **his chief friends;** e.g., Socrates, the friend of Plato, is libelled by Aristophanes in his *Clouds*.

656. **tyrant,** an absolute ruler, without the modern bad sense.

656. **Dionysius** was Tyrant of Syracuse. Died B.C. 367. See note to l. 187. Dionysius made Attic Greek the court language of Syracuse, and invited the Attic philosophers to attend his court. Plato was one of those who accepted the invitation.



It is a very common mistake to make
all the things that are true, all
the things that are false, and so on.

But the things that are true
are not the things that are false
and so on.

this licensing of poems had reference and dependence to many other provisos there set down in his fancied republic, which in this world could have no place? And so neither he himself, 660 nor any magistrate or city ever imitated that course, which taken apart from those other collateral injunctions must needs be vain and fruitless. / For if they fell upon one kind of strictness, unless their care were equal to regulate all other things of like aptness to corrupt the mind, that single endeavour they knew would be but a fond labour; to shut and fortify one gate against corruption, and be necessitated to leave others round about wide open. (If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man). 670 No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and Doric. (There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth but what by their allowance shall be thought honest; for such Plato was provided of.) It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say.

662. **taken apart**, *et seq.*, *i.e.*, taken by itself, without the other injunctions, with which it forms a complete whole.

663. **fell upon**, found and adopted.

666. **fond**, foolish. From Mid. Eng. *fon* = a fool. The word is still used in Yorkshire in the same sense; *cf.*

"'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes."—CORIOLANUS.

668, 669. **If we . . . manners**, if we think that by regulating printing we thereby regulate manners.

672. **Doric**. The Doric was the crude, harsh, older language of Greece, and Milton uses the

term Doric to express anything severe and simple. Plato allowed Doric music in his republic.

672. **There must be licensing dancers**, *i.e.*, dancers must also be licensed.

674. **allowance**, approval, as in l. 648.

675. **provided of**, *i.e.*, provided with; *cf.* "condemned of" in l. 161.

677. **guitars**, spelt by Milton "ghittarrs." Italian *chitarra*, Latin *cithara*. All these restrictions are recommended by Plato in his Republic.

678. **licensed what**, *i.e.*, licensed as to what.

680

And who shall silence all the ~~airs~~ and (madrigals) that whisper softness in chambers? The windows also, and the (balconies) must be thought on; there are (shrewd) books with dangerous (frontispieces) set to sale: who shall prohibit them? Shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their (visitors) to inquire what lectures the (bagpipe) and the (rebec) reads, even to the (ballatry) and the (gamut) of every (municipal) fiddler, for these are the countryman's *Arcadias* and his *Montemayors*. Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears

679. **madrigals**, literally a smooth pastoral song. Italian *madrigali* from *mandra* = a flock.

680. **balconies**. From It. *balcone* = an outjutting corner of a house.

681. **shrewd**, in origin means biting or dangerous, and has something of that meaning here. The word is derived from A.S. *screawa*, the shrew mouse, whose bite was thought to be fatal to horses.

682. **frontispieces**, spelt more correctly by Milton "frontispices." L. *frons* = front, *spicere* = to look.

683. **visitors**, inspectors. Laud had annual visitations to watch the Preachers.

684. **bagpipe**. The bagpipe was once as familiar in the South as it is now in Scotland.

684. **rebec**, a fiddle with three strings. Old Fr. *rebec*.

684. **reads**, in Mod. Eng. "read."

684, 685. **even to**, even going as low as to.

685. **ballatry**, store of ballads. French *ballade*, from Low Latin *ballare* = to dance.

685. **gamut**, range. Guy of Arezzo (1000 A.D.) named the notes of the scale a, b, c, d, e, f, g, and the Greek name of

the last letter, *gamma*, gave its name to the whole scale. *Ut*, the old Latin name for "doh," has been added.

685. **municipal**, rustic. A "municipium" was considered by the Romans inferior to a city, and its inhabitants were consequently looked upon as of an inferior order.

686. **Arcadias**. *Arcadia* was the title of a pastoral romance by Sir Philip Sidney, published in 1590.

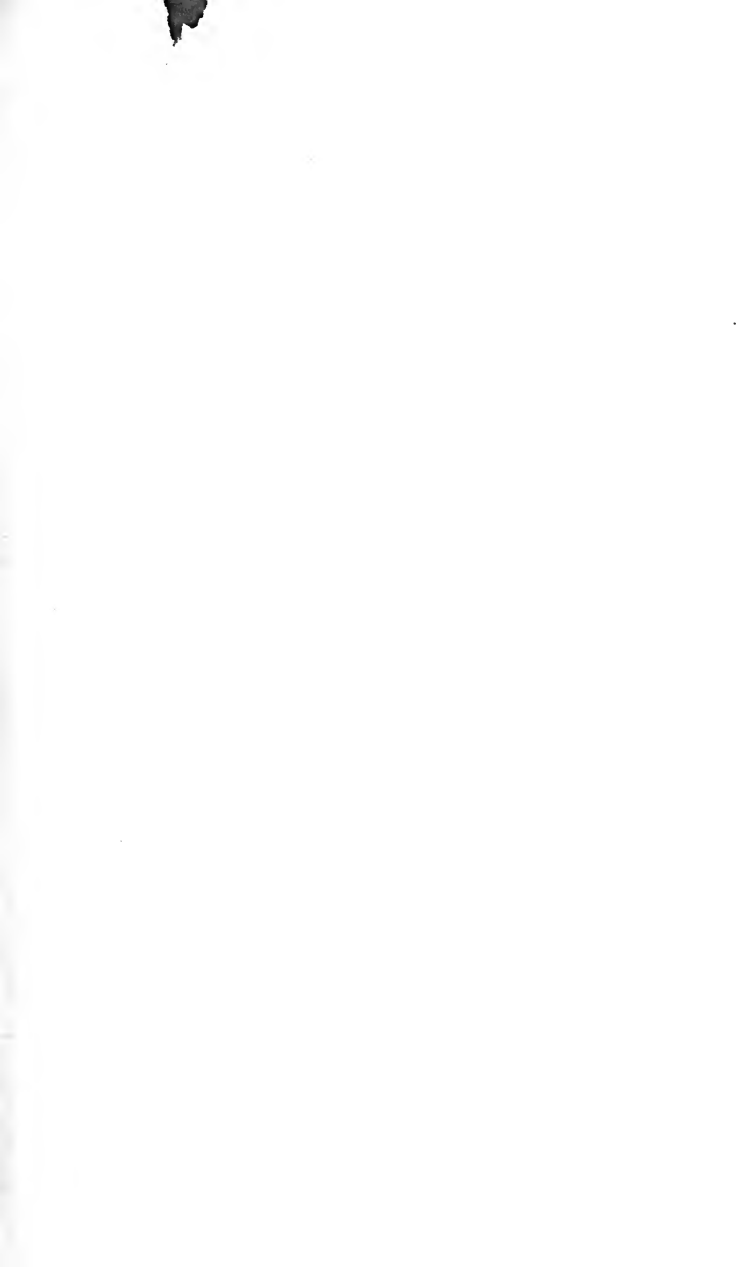
686. **Montemayor** wrote a pastoral romance in Spanish called *Diana*, which was translated into English by Bartholomew Young in 1598. These pastoral romances were very popular in the late 16th and 17th centuries.

687. **natural corruption**. Supply "is there." Gluttony was a vice commonly attributed to Englishmen. Holt White quotes Chaucer's *Franklin's tale*:—

"His table dormant in his halle
alway
Stood redy covered al the longe
day."

and Sir Thomas Eliot's *Castell of Health*.

"The spirit of gluttony triumphing among us in his glorious chariot called welfare, driving us afore him into his dungeon of surfeit."





ill abroad, than household gluttony? Who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? And what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harboured? Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some more sober workmasters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state. To sequester out of the world into *Atlantic* and *Utopian* politics, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably. Nor is it Plato's licensing of books will do this, which necessarily pulls along with it so many other kinds of licensing, as will make us all both ridiculous and weary, and yet frustrate; but those unwritten, or at least unconstraining

687, 688. **hears ill**, hears itself ill-spoken of, hears ill words.

689. **rectors**, rulers, guardians. Latin *rectum* = to rule.

690. **inhibit**, restrain.

691. **harboured**, from Old High German *heri* = army, *bergan* = to shelter.

692. **sober**, thoughtful, grave-minded.

693. **wanton**, literally "lacking in education"; hence "loose." A.S. *wan* = lacking, *teon* = to educate,

696. **what presumed**, how far liberty of speed and action may be allowed to go.

701. **sequester**, withdraw

oneself. Latin. *sequestrare* = to draw aside. Cf. "A fugitive and cloistered virtue," l. 505.

701, 702. **Atlantic and Utopian**. A reference to the fanciful commonwealths described by Bacon in his *New Atlantis*, published 1626, and Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*, published 1516. Milton wrote "Eutopian."

702. **polities**, states, commonwealths.

702. **drawn into use**, become practical.

705. **unavoidably**, i.e., unable to avoid the existing evil.

708. **frustrate**, in vain. L. *frustra* = fruitlessly.

laws of virtuous education, religious and civil nurture, which
 710 Plato there mentions as the bonds and ligaments of the
 commonwealth, the pillars and sustainers of every written
 statute—these they be which will bear chief sway in such
 matters as these, when all licensing will be easily eluded.
 Impunity and remissness, for certain, are the bane of a
 commonwealth; but here the great art lies, to discern in what
 the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things
 persuasion only is to work. If every action which is good or evil
 in man at ripe years were to be under pittance and prescription
 and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise
 720 could be then due to well-doing, what gramercy to be sober,
 just, or continent? Many there be that complain of Divine
 Providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues!
 When God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose,
 for reason is but choosing; he had been else a mere artificial
 Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions. We ourselves
 esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force;
 God therefore left him free, set before him a provoking object,
 ever almost in his eyes: herein consisted his merit, herein the
 right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore
 730 did he create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but
 that these rightly tempered are the very ingredients of virtue?
 They are not skilful considerers of human things, who
 imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin;

708, 709. **unconstraining laws**, *i.e.*, laws not compulsory.

716. **bid**, order.

718. **under pittance**, *i.e.*, under a system of doles or allowance. A pittance was originally the amount allowed to a monk for each repast. *Fr. pitance*, Lat. *pietantia* = the gift of the pious for charity. Others connect it with the French *petit*.

720. **gramercy**, great thanks; *Fr. grand merci*. Used more

frequently as an ejaculation equivalent to "grant me mercy."

725. **motions**, puppet show.

726. **esteem not of**, do not think highly of, do not value.

726. **of force**, *i.e.*, the result of force.

727. **provoking**, *i.e.*, provoking or alluring to sin.

731. **tempered**, moderated, restrained.

733. **matter of sin**, objects which make to sin.

1
Kearney at Morning.

for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such a universal thing as books are; and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire. Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewel left: ye cannot bereave him of his covetousness. Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste that came not thither so; such great care and wisdom is required to the right managing of this point. Suppose we could expel sin by this means; (look) how much we thus expel of sin, so much we expel of virtue: for the matter of them both is the same; remove that, and ye remove them both alike. This justifies the high Providence of God, Who, though He commands us temperance, justice, continence, yet pours out before us even to a profuseness all desirable things, and gives us minds that can wander beyond all limit and satiety. Why should we then affect a rigour contrary to the manner of God and of Nature, by abridging or scanting those means, which books freely permitted are, both to the trial of virtue and the exercise of truth? It would be better done, to learn that the law must needs be frivolous which goes to restrain things (uncertainly) and yet equally working to good and to evil. And were I the chooser, a (dram) of well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil doing. (For God sure esteems

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750

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740. **bereave**, A.S. *bereafian* = to rob.

745. **look**, &c. In modern English we should write, "According as we thus expel sin, so to the same extent we also expel virtue." The virtue or vice lies in the resisting or yielding.

753. **scanting**, giving scant measure of. M.E. *scant*, Ice-

landic *skamt* = short.

754. **books freely permitted**, i.e., unlicensed.

756. **that the law, that that law**.

757. **uncertainly**, i.e., at the whim or judgment of a licenser.

758. **dram**, contracted from the Greek word *drachmē*—a small coin.

the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious. And albeit whatever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing, may be fitly called our book, and is of the same effect that writings are, yet grant the thing to be prohibited were only books, it appears that this order hitherto is far insufficient to the end which it intends. Do we not see, not once or oftener, but weekly, that continued court-libel against the Parliament and City, printed, as the wet sheets can witness, and dispersed
 770 among us for all that licensing can do? Yet this is the (prime) service a man would think, wherein this Order should give proof of itself. If it were executed, you'll say. But, certain, if execution be remiss or blindfold now and (in this particular), what will it be hereafter and in other books? If then the Order shall not be vain and (frustrate), behold a new labour, Lords and Commons! Ye must repeal and proscribe all scandalous and unlicensed books already printed and (divulged); after ye have drawn them up into a list, that all may know which are
 780 condemned and which not; and ordain that no foreign books be delivered out of custody, till they have been read over. I This office will require the whole time of not a few overseers, and those no (vulgar) men. There be also books which are partly useful and excellent, partly culpable and pernicious;

762. **albeit**, although, notwithstanding that.

762, 763. **we hear or see**, Cf. the well-known lines in *As You Like It*, II. i. 16-17.

"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
 Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

768. **continued court-libel**, printed on behalf of the King, and called *Mercuricus Aulicus*; appeared regularly from the

beginning of 1642 to the end of 1645.

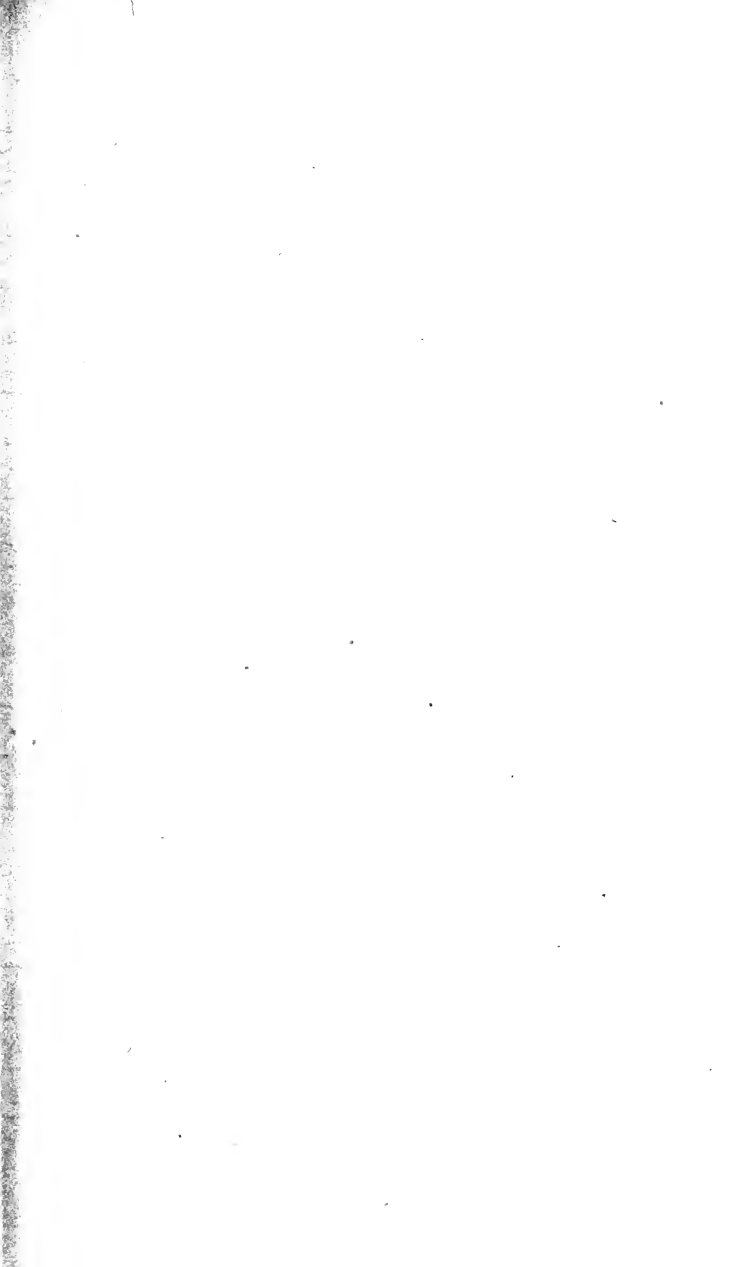
771. **prime**, the service of prime or first importance.

774. **in this particular**, i.e., in repressing violent Royalist literature.

776. **frustrate**, useless, as in l. 708.

778. **divulged**, published, sold.

783. **vulgar**, unlearned, ignorant.



My dear mother
all good.

this work will ask as many more officials, to make expurgations and expunctions, that the Commonwealth of Learning be not damnified. (In fine,) when the multitude of books increase upon their hands, ye must be fain to catalogue all those printers who are found frequently offending, and forbid the importation of their whole suspected typography. In a word, that this your Order may be exact and not deficient, ye must reform it perfectly according to the model of Trent and Seville, which I know ye abhor to do. Yet though ye should condescend to this, which God forbid, the Order still would be but fruitless and defective to that end whereto ye meant it. If to prevent sects and schisms, who is so unread or so uncatechised in story, that hath not heard of many sects refusing books as a hindrance, and preserving their doctrine unmixed for many ages only by unwritten traditions? The Christian faith, for that was once a schism, is not unknown to have spread all over Asia, ere any Gospel or Epistle was seen in writing. If the amendment of manners be aimed at, look into Italy and Spain, whether those places be one scruple the better, the honester, the wiser, the chaster, since all the inquisitional rigour that hath been executed upon books.

Another reason whereby to make it plain that this Order will miss the end it seeks, consider by the quality which ought to be in every licenser. It cannot be denied but that he who is made judge to sit upon the birth or death of books whether

785. **officials.** At this time a title of great reproach, owing to its connection with Laud.

"An official was the name of the officer in the Ecclesiastical Courts to whom the Bishops deputed the cognizance of spiritual offences. Laud had let them loose on the country."—MILTON'S *Tract on Reformation*.

787. **In fine**, finally, in the end.

788. **fain**, A.S. *fægn* = glad.

792. **Trent** refers to the Indexes ordered by the Trentine Council.

792. **Seville**; an allusion to the Spanish Inquisition.

793. **condescend** here means "agree."

795. **If to prevent**, if intended to prevent. Notice that "prevent" is here used in its modern meaning.

796. **story**, history, of which word "story" is an abbreviation.

797. **refusing books**. As the Druids did, and as Freemasons are also thought to do.

- 810 they may be wafted into this world or not, had need to be a man above the common measure both studious, learned, and judicious; there may be else no mean mistakes in the censure of what is passable or not; which is also no mean injury. If he be of such worth as behoves him, there cannot be a more tedious and unpleasing (journey-work), a greater loss of time levied upon his head, than to be made the perpetual reader of (unchosen) books and pamphlets, oft-times huge volumes. There is no book that is acceptable unless at certain seasons; but to be enjoined the reading of that at all times, and in a hand scarce
- 820 legible, whereof three pages (would not down) at any time in the fairest print, is an imposition which I cannot believe how he that values time and his own studies, or is but of a (sensible nostril), should be able to endure. In this one thing I crave leave of the present licensers to be pardoned for so thinking; who doubtless took this office up, looking on it through their obedience to the Parliament, whose command perhaps made all things seem easy and unlaborious to them; but that this short trial hath (wearied them) out already, their own expressions and excuses to them who make so many journeys to solicit their
- 830 license are testimony enough. Seeing therefore those who now possess the employment by all evident signs wish themselves well rid of it, and that no man of worth, none that is not

812. **mean**, moderate, small.

812. **censure**, judgment.

815. **journey-work**, journey-man's work, *i.e.*, the work of a day labourer, hence mechanical. Fr. *journée*; L. *diurnus* = daily.

817. **unchosen**, *i.e.*, by himself. Not books of his own choice.

817. **pamphlets**, Skeat favours the derivation of the word from *Pamphila*, a Latin writer of numerous epitomes, who lived in the first century.

819. **that**, that book. *That* is used disparagingly, as in l. 554.

820. **would not down**, would not go down. The omission of the verb of motion before adverbs of motion was common.

821. **imposition**, task.

822, 823. **sensible nostril**, of an acute discriminating taste. Used as we now use the expression "man of delicate taste." *Sensible* = sensitive; *nostril* is from A.S. *nas* = nose; *thryl* = passage.

828. **wearied them**. Mabbett, one of the licensers, gave up his office in 1649. See chapter on "Cause and Effect."

832. **that**, seeing that.

can must have been
greatly improved since
the arrival of the
new ones. The old ones
were very poor.

1. is feared the infection that
may spread
harm may be propagated
without books by trading
evil manners are as per-
fectly learnt without
books a thousand other
ways which cannot be
stopped.

how can the business thence
does he trust in.

X
wise men would only get
good out of a volume, a fool
nothing any way.

2. we must not expose ourselves to
temptations without necessity
to separate out the world
into Atlantic & European parties
will not mend our condition
3. consider the quality which ought
to be in every business
4. it can do no good to the
manifold heart it causes
a genius must be authorized
by a good brilliant person.

a plain unthrift of his own hours, is ever likely to succeed them, except he mean to put himself to the salary of a press-corrector, we may easily foresee what kind of licensers we are to expect hereafter—either ignorant imperious and remiss, or basely pecuniary. This is what I had to show, wherein this Order cannot conduce to that end, whereof it bears the intention.

I lastly proceed from the no good it can do to the manifest hurt it causes, in being first the greatest discouragement and 840 affront that can be offered to learning and to learned men. It was the complaint and lamentation of prelates, upon every least breath of a motion to remove pluralities and distribute more equally Church revenues, that then all learning would be for ever dashed and discouraged. But as for that opinion, I never found cause to think that the tenth part of learning stood or fell with the clergy: nor could I ever but hold it for a sordid and unworthy speech of any churchman who had a competency left him. If therefore ye be loth to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pre- 850 tenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study and love learning for itself, not for lucre or any other end but the service of God and of Truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labours advance the good of mankind, then know, that so far to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning and

833. plain unthrift, manifest waster.

834. salary, originally meant salt-money. Latin *sal*=salt.

838. whereof, &c., which it is intended to effect.

842. lamentation of prelates.

"They shame not to profess that unless we fat them like boars, and cram them as they list with wealth, with Deaneries and Pluralities, with Baronies and Stately Preferments, all Learning

and Religion will go underfoot."
—MILTON.

These were the arguments used against the Bill of 1641, abolishing Bishops, Deans and Chapters.

843. pluralities, the holding of two or more church appointments.

845. dashed, dashed down.

850. discontent, make discontented.

never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind
 860 without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism or
 something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and
 indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon
 him. What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy
 at school, if we have only scaped the ferular to come under the
 fescu of an Imprimatur, if serious and elaborate writings, as
 if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under
 his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory
 eyes of a temporising and extemporising licenser? He who
 is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to
 870 be evil, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no
 great argument to think himself reputed in the Commonwealth
 wherein he was born for other than a fool or a foreigner.
 When a man writes to the world he summons up all his
 reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditates, is
 industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious
 friends; after all which done he takes himself to be informed
 in what he writes as well as any that writ before him. If in
 this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no
 years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him
 880 to that state of maturity as not to be still mistrusted and
 suspected, unless he carry all his considerate diligence, all his
 midnight watchings and expense of Palladian oil to the hasty
 view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger,

864. *scaped*, escaped.

864. *ferular*, a rod with a flattened end, used by school-masters of that time. *L. ferula* from *fero*=I strike.

865. *fescu*, a pointer.

866. *theme*, subject set for composition.

867. *cursory*, over-looking, running over. Latin *curro*, *cursum*=I run.

868. *temporising*, studying only the policy of the moment.

868. *extemporising*, acting without serious thought.

870. *standing to*, ready to risk.

876. *after all which done*, after the doing of all which. A Latinism.

881. *considerate*, thoughtful, considering.

882. *Palladian oil*. Pallas Athene was the Goddess of Learning, and the olive tree was dedicated to her.

5. it would undervalue &
dilute the whole nation
6. it reflects to the discredit of our
ministers -

to be the first to see the light
get the first to see the light
to be the first to see the light
to be the first to see the light
to be the first to see the light

mental

practical

perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labour of book-writing, and, if he be not repulsed or slighted, must appear in print like a **puny** with his guardian and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and surety, that he is no idiot, or seducer, it cannot be but a dishonour and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of Learning. And what if the author shall be one so copious of fancy as to have many things well worth the adding come into his mind after licensing, while the book is yet under the press, which not seldom happens to the best and diligentest writers—and that perhaps a dozen times in one book! The printer dares not go beyond his licensed copy; so often then must the author trudge to his leave-giver, that those his new insertions may be viewed; and many a jaunt will be made, ere that Licenser, for it must be the same man, can either be found, or found at leisure. Meanwhile either the press must stand still, which is no small damage, or the author lose his accuratest thoughts, and send the book forth worse than he had made it, which to a diligent writer is the greatest melancholy and vexation that can befall. And how can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, how can he be a doctor in his book, as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal licenser to blot

886. **puny**, weakling. Literally a posthumous child. Fr. *puis-né*; Lat. *post*=after, *natum*=birth.

887. **title**, title-page.

894. **diligentest**; cf. *acutest*, *accuratest*, etc.

897. **jaunt**, Fr. *jancer* = to ride a prancing horse. Here used in its modern sense of a purposeless or unnecessary walk.

898. **same man**. This does not appear in the order of Parliament (*q.v.*).

901. **accuratest**. Cf. "diligentest," l. 894.

903. **melancholy**, mortification of spirit.

905. **doctor**, a teacher.

906. **whenas**, when, seeing that.

906. **delivers**, brings forth.

907. **patriarchal**; an allusion to Laud, who was accused of copying Wolsey in desiring to become Patriarch of the Western Church.

or alter what precisely accords not with the (hide-bound) humour which he calls his judgment; when every acute reader upon
 910 the first sight of a (pedantic) licence will be ready with these like words to (ding) the book a quoit's distance from him:—"I hate a (pupil teacher), I endure not an instructor that comes to me under the wardship of an overseeing fist; I know nothing of the licenser, but that I have his own hand here for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his judgment"? "The State, sir," replies the (Stationer); but has a quick return:—"The State shall be my governors, but not my critics; they may be mistaken in the choice of a licenser, as easily as this licenser may be mistaken in an author; this is some common stuff." And he might add.
 920 from Sir Francis Bacon, *That such authorized books are but the language of the times.* For though a licenser should happen to be judicious more than ordinary, which will (be a great jeopardy of the next succession,) yet his very office and his commission enjoins him to let pass nothing but what is (vulgarly) received already. Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work of any deceased author, though never so famous in his lifetime and even to this day, come to their hands for licence to be printed or reprinted, if there be found in his book one

"The little Patriarch frets and fumes to hear

How cheap his knacks are sold in Lambeth Fair."

—Quoted from *Somers' Tracts*, 1641, by HOLT WHITE.

Milton, in his *Tractate on Reformation*, accuses Laud of scrambling for a Patriarchdom.

908. **hide-bound**, *i.e.*, unelastic, stereotyped, narrowed.

910. **pedantic**, schoolmaster-like.

911. **ding**, fling away angrily.

912. **a pupil teacher**, a teacher treated like a pupil.

916. **Stationer**, publisher.

916. **quick return**, ready reply.

920. from Sir Francis Bacon. In a tract on *Church Controversies*, published in 1589.

920, 921. **are but the language of the times**, *i.e.*, reflect only the opinions in favour at the time.

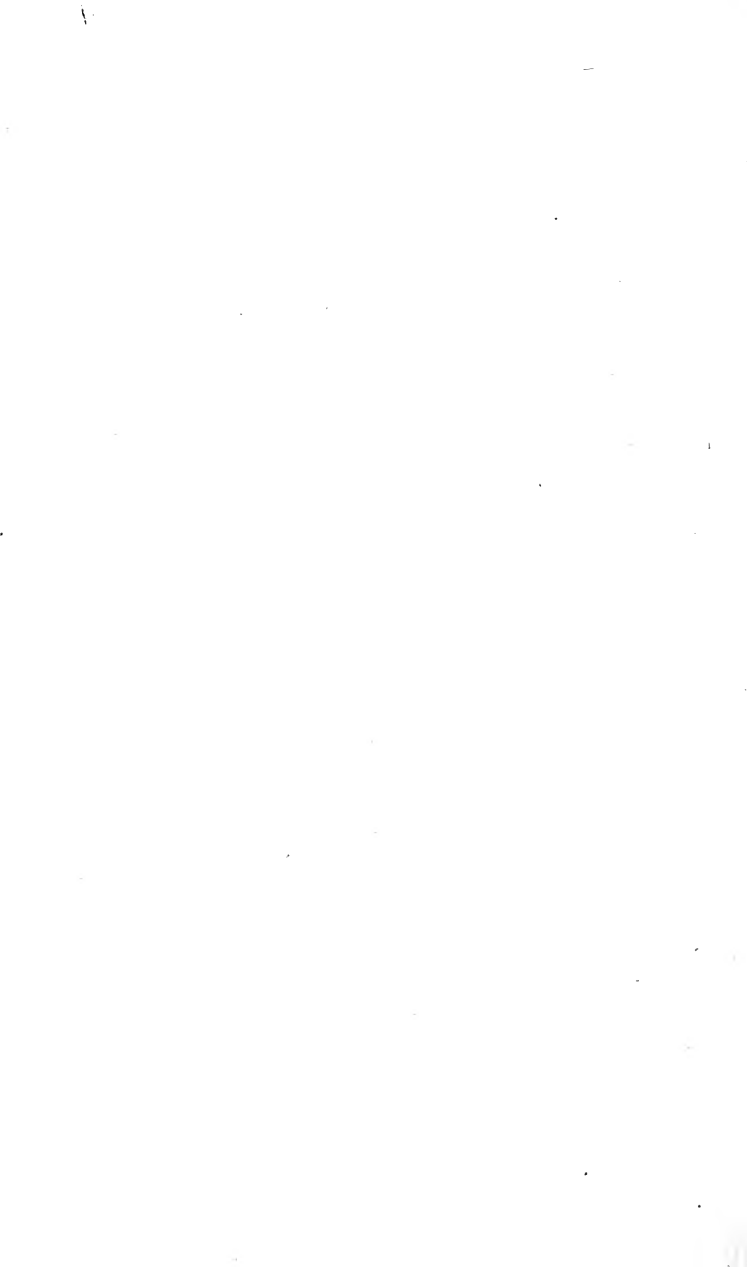
922, 923. **be a great jeopardy of the next succession**, make his successor's task difficult.

923. **jeopardy**, from Fr. *jeu parti*, Lat. *jocus partitus* = a divided game; a game with two sides.

924. **vulgarly**, commonly.

926. **never so famous**. Cf. l. 563.





sentence of a venturous edge uttered in the height of zeal—and who knows whether it might not be the dictate of a divine spirit, yet not suiting with every low decrepit humour of their own—though it were Knox himself, the Reformer of a Kingdom, that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash: the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost for the fearfulness or the presumptuous rashness of a perfunctory licenser. And to what an author this violence hath been lately done, and in what book of greatest consequence to be faithfully published, I could now instance, but shall forbear till a more convenient season. Yet if these things be not resented seriously and timely by them who have the remedy in their power, but that such iron-moulds as these shall have authority to gnaw out the choicest periods of exquisitest books, and to commit such a treacherous fraud against the orphan remainders of worthiest men after death, the more sorrow will belong to that hapless race of men, whose misfortune it is to have understanding. Henceforth let no man care to learn, or care to be more than worldly wise; for certainly in higher matters to be ignorant and slothful, to be a common steadfast dunce, will be the only pleasant life, and only in request.

And as it is a particular disesteem of every knowing person alive, and most injurious to the written labours and monuments of the dead, so to me it seems an undervaluing and vilifying of the whole Nation. I cannot set so light by all the invention, the art, the wit, the grave and solid judgment which is in

929. **venturous**, bold.

931. **suiting with**, in agreement with.

931. **decrepit**, lit., noiseless, hence feeble. *L. decrepitus*.

932. **Knox**, the great Scotch Reformer lived 1515-1572. An edition of Knox's *History of the Reformation in Scotland* was published in 1644 in a mutilated form.

933. **pardon him their dash**, spare him their deleting mark.

934, 935. **fearfulness**, timidity, fulness of fear.

937. **lately done**. Holt White thinks this refers to Coke's *Institutes*, which were published in 1641, seven years after Coke's death.

941. **iron-moulds**, spoilers by marking.

942. **exquisitest**. Cf. "accuratest," l. 901, etc.

953. **set so light**, value so lightly, set so light a value on.

England, as that it can be comprehended in any twenty capacities how good soever: much less that it should not pass except their superintendence be over it, except it be sifted and strained with their strainers, that it should be uncurrent without their manual stamp. Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolised and traded in by tickets and statutes, and standards.) We must not think to make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the land, to mark and license it like our broadcloth and our woolpacks. What is it but a servitude like that imposed by the Philistines, not to be allowed the sharpening of our own axes and coulters, but we must repair from all quarters to twenty licensing forges? Had anyone written and divulged erroneous things and scandalous to honest life, misusing and forfeiting the esteem had of his reason among men; if after conviction this only censure were adjudged him, that he should never henceforth write but what were first examined by an appointed officer, whose hand should be annexed to pass his credit for him, that now he might be

955, 956. **twenty capacities**, *i.e.*, the twenty licensors.

959. **manual stamp**, the "Imprimatur" above their signature.

960. **monopolised**. Monopolies were one of the hated means by which Charles I. supplied himself with funds.

960. **tickets**, acknowledgments for the receipt of goods on credit. The modern slang expression "tick," meaning credit, is derived from it.

961. **statutes**, securities given to tradesmen for debts contracted.

961. **standards**, the standards for weights and measures.

962. **staple commodity**, a commodity whose buying and selling is determined by law; as was the case with wool,

wool-fells and hides from the time of the Plantagenets. Certain towns only (ten in number) were allowed to export these staples, and at these the King's officers assessed the tax due. The towns were called "Towns of the Staple."

964. **by the Philistines**, in the time of Saul. See I Samuel xiii, 19-22.

"But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock."

965. **coulters**. The *coulter* is the cutting blade of the plough. *L. colo* = I cultivate.

966. **repair**, proceed.

967. **divulged**, made public, published.

969. **censure**, judgment.

1875-1876

1876-1877

With the young
disrupts the long
spine.

1881

safely read ; it could not be apprehended less than a disgraceful punishment. Whence to include the whole Nation, and those that never yet thus offended, under such a diffident and suspectful prohibition, may plainly be understood what a disparagement it is. So much the more, whenas debtors and delinquents may walk abroad without a keeper, but unoffensive books must not stir forth without a visible jailer in their title. Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach ; for if we so jealous over them, as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what do we but censure them for a giddy, vicious and ungrounded people, in such a sick and weak state of faith and discretion, as to be able to take nothing down but through the pipe of a licenser ? That this is care or love of them, we cannot pretend, whenas in those popish places where the laity are most hated and despised the same strictness is used over them. Wisdom we cannot call it, because it stops but one breach of licence, nor that neither, whenas those corruptions which it seeks to prevent break in faster at other doors which cannot be shut. 980 990

And in conclusion it reflects to the disrepute of our Ministers also, of whose labours we should hope better and of the proficiency which their flock reaps by them, than that after all this light of the Gospel which is, and is to be, and all this continual preaching, they should be still frequented with such an unprincipled, unedified, and laic rabble, as that the whiff of every new pamphlet should stagger them out of their catechism and Christian walking. This may have much reason to discourage the Ministers when such a low conceit is 1000

975. **diffident**, mistrusting, not in the modern sense of bashful.

977, 986. **whenas**, seeing that.

980, 981. **if we so jealous**, if we be so jealously watchful.

989. **nor that neither**. A double negative. Frequent in

Shakespeare, and in A.S.

996. **frequented with**, have as their usual congregation.

997. **laic**, as opposed to cleric, but used here disparagingly.

1000. **low conceit**, poor opinion. Conceit and concept are doublets.

had of all their exhortations and the benefiting of their hearers, as that they are not thought fit to be turned loose to three sheets of paper without a licenser; that all the sermons, all the lectures preached, printed, (vented) in such numbers and such volumes as have now well-nigh made all other books unsaleable, should not be armour enough against one single (Enchiridion), without the (Castle of St. Angelo) of an Imprimatur.

And lest some should persuade ye, Lords and Commons, that these arguments of learned men's discouragement at this
 1010 your Order are mere (flourishes), and not real, I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries where this kind of inquisition tyrannises; when I have sat among their learned men, for that honour I had, and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought; that this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits, that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fustian, There it was that I
 1020 found and visited the famous (Galileo) grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the

1004. vented, published, sent out.

1004. in such numbers. See Historical Notes. Over 30,000 pamphlets were issued between 1640 and 1660, while religious sermons and controversies were of almost daily issue.

1007. Enchiridion. Hand-book. Greek *en*=in; *cheir*=the hand. The word also means a "dagger," and the double meaning carries on the metaphor of "armour."

1007. Castle of St. Angelo was the prison at Rome used for the Pope's prisoners. The phrase means therefore "without the Popish imprisonment of

licensing."

1010. flourishes, empty sounds, like the flourish of trumpets.

1012. I have sat. Refers to his visit to Italy in 1638.

1013. counted, considered.

1019. fustian, is cloth of common material, and is hence applied to any worthless matter.

1020. Galileo died 1642, at the age of 78. He was imprisoned by the Inquisition for maintaining that the earth moved round the sun. This the clergy of the day thought was contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures.

without the positive improvement of
living up

the

Q - I am writing after
completion of the
course. I have been
very busy since I came
back from America.
I hope you are well.

(Franciscan) and (Dominican) licensers thought. And though I knew that England (then) was groaning loudest under the prelatical yoke, nevertheless I took it as a pledge of future happiness, that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty. Yet was it beyond my hope that (those worthies) were then breathing in her air who should be her leaders to such a deliverance as shall never be forgotten by any revolution of time that this world hath to finish. When that was once begun, it was as little in my fear, that what words of complaint 1030 I heard among learned men of other parts uttered against the Inquisition, the same I should hear by as learned men at home uttered (in time of Parliament) against an order of licensing; and that so generally, that when I had disclosed myself a companion of their discontent, I might say, if (without envy,) that (he) whom an honest quæstorship had endeared to the Sicilians was not more by them importuned against Verres than the favourable opinion (which I had among many who honour ye, and are known and respected by ye, loaded me with entreaties and persuasions, that I would not despair to 1040 lay together that which just reason should bring into my

1022. **Franciscan.** The Franciscan or Gray Friars were founded in 1210 by St. Francis of Assisi. Like their great rivals, the Dominicans, they were a mendicant order.

1022. **Dominican.** The Dominican or Black Friars were founded in 1216 by Domingo de Guzman. Torquemada, the introducer of the Inquisition into Spain, was a Dominican monk.

1023. **then.** Laud and the Courts of High Commission and Star Chamber were at that time most active. See "Historical Notes" on the Star Chamber for the years 1637, 1638.

1026. **those worthies,** Pym, Hampden, etc., the leaders of the Long Parliament.

1033. **in time of Parliament,** while a Parliament was sitting, a reference to the long years of personal government by Charles I., 1629-1640.

1035. **without envy,** without causing the envy of others.

1036. **he.** Cicero was quæstor or Roman representative in Sicily, B.C. 75, and prepared there his indictment against the rapacity of Verres, Roman Governor of Sicily, B.C. 73-71. The quæstor was responsible for the public funds.

1038. **which I had,** which I had gained.

mind toward the removal of an undeserved thralldom upon learning. That this is not therefore the disburdening of a particular fancy, but the common grievance of all those who had prepared their minds and studies above the vulgar pitch to advance truth in others, and from others to entertain it, thus much may satisfy. And in their name I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the general murmur is; that if it come to inquisitioning again and licensing, and that we are so timorous of ourselves and so suspicious of all men as to fear each book and the shaking of every leaf before we know what the contents are, if some who but of late were little better than silenced from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please, it cannot be guessed what is intended by some but a second tyranny over learning: and will soon put it out of controversy, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same to us both name and thing. That those evils of Prelacy which before from five or six and twenty sees were distributively charged upon the whole people, will now light wholly upon learning, is not obscure to us: whenas now the pastor of a small unlearned parish on the sudden shall be exalted Archbishop over a large diocese of books and yet not remove, but keep his other (cure too, a mystical pluralist.) He who but of late cried down the sole ordination of every novice (Bachelor) of Art, and denied

1046. **entertain it**, consider it when advanced by others.

1049, 1050. **and that**. In modern English we should say "and if." The usage is similar to that in modern French, where the conjunction is not repeated but is replaced by "que." "Si vous avez assez de temps, et que vous le voulez, passez chez moi ce soir."

1052, 1053. **but of late**. Refers to Laud's severities against Puritans.

1056. **it**, i.e., that Priest and Presbyter were the same. See

Sonnet on the "New Forcers of Conscience":—

"New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large."

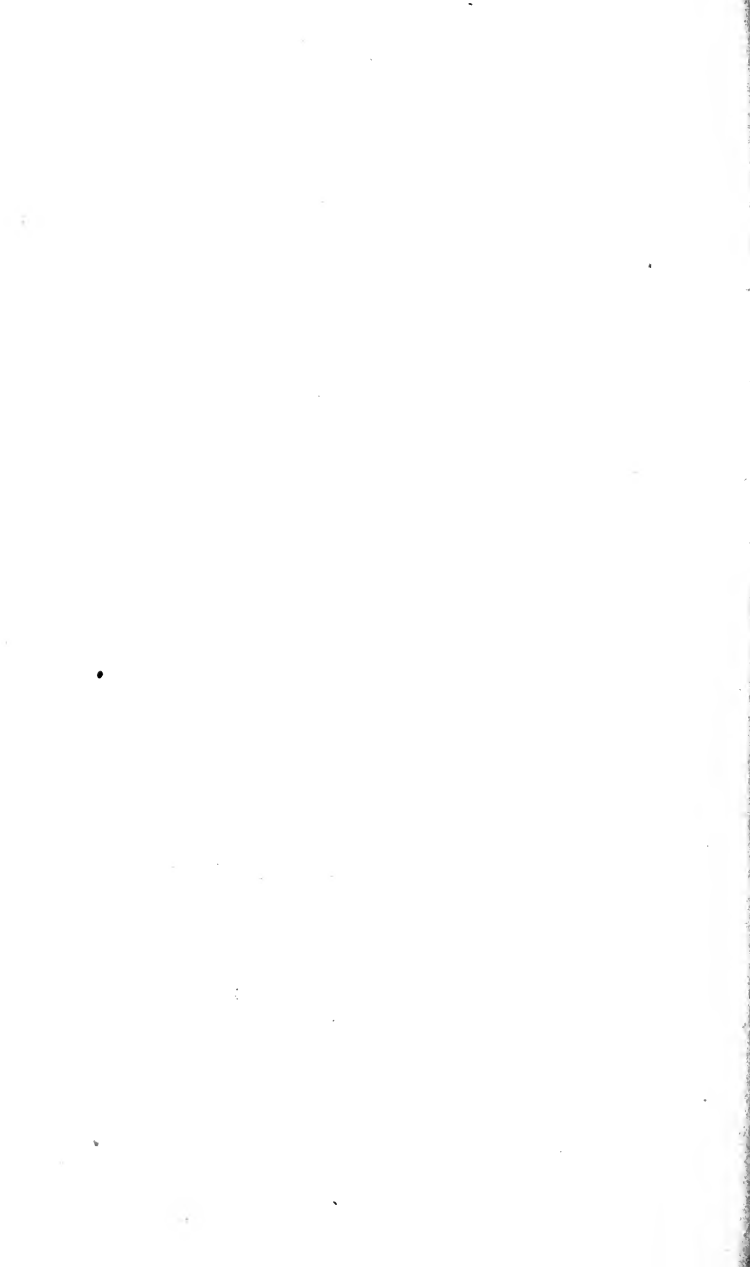
1063. **cure**, care, office.

1064. **mystical pluralist**, a pluralist of a strange or mystical kind.

1065, 1066. **sole ordination**, sole jurisdiction, rights claimed by the Bishops. These were the principal points in the Smectymnuus controversy.

1065. **Bachelor**. Low Lat. *baccalarius* = a farm servant.





(sole jurisdiction) over the simplest parishioner, shall now at home in his private chair assume both these over worthiest and (excellentest) books and ablest authors that write them. This is not, ye (Covenants) and (Protestations) that we have made, this is not to put down Prelacy: this is but ^{exchange} to chop an Episcopacy; this is but to translate the (Palace Metropolitan) from one kind of dominion into another; this is but an old (canonical sleight) of (commuting our penance.) To startle thus betimes at a mere unlicensed pamphlet will (after a while be afraid) of every conventicle and a while after will make a (conventicle) of every Christian meeting. But I am certain that a State governed by the rules of justice and fortitude, or a Church built and founded upon the rock of faith and true knowledge, cannot be so pusillanimous. While things are yet not constituted in religion, that freedom of writing should be restrained by a discipline imitated from the Prelates and learnt by them from the Inquisition, to shut us up all again into the breast

1070

1080

hence anyone in an inferior position, and so a student proceeding to the Master's or Doctor's degree.

1068. **excellentest.** Accurate, diligent, and many others have already been noted.

1069. **Covenants.** Refers to the covenant with Scotland, 1638, and that drawn up by the Commons, 1643.

1069. **Protestations.** In 1641, on hearing of an attempt by Charles to bring down the army of the North to overawe them, the Long Parliament drew up a Protestation called the Grand Remonstrance, stating their position with regard to the King and Church, and defending themselves from the distortions of their policy.

1071. **chop, exchange.** A.S. *ceapan* = to bargain. The word

is found in Cheapside, Eastcheap, Chapman.

1071, 1072. **Palace Metropolitan.** The Archbishop of Canterbury's Palace at Lambeth. The Metropolitan is the chief or Primate of the Bishops.

1073. **canonical sleight,** trick allowed by the canons of the Church.

1073, 1074. **commuting our penance,** changing our penance, generally by avoiding the penance by payment of money. Milton means that we suffer in the same way under a commuted or changed name.

1075. **after a while be afraid,** after a while (to) be afraid.

1075. **conventicle,** the name applied to the meeting places of the nonconformists. L. *con* = together, *venio* = I come.

of a licenser must needs give cause of doubt and discouragement to all learned and religious men. Who cannot but discern the fineness of this politic drift, and who are the contrivers; that while Bishops were to be baited down, then all Presses might be open? It was the People's birthright and privilege in time of Parliament, it was the breaking forth of light. But now, the Bishops (abrogated) and (voided out the Church,) as if our Reformation sought no more but to make room for others into their seats under another name, the episcopal arts begin to bud again, the cruse of truth must run no more oil, liberty of printing must be enthralled again under a prelati cal commission of twenty, the privilege of the people nullified, and which is worse, the freedom of learning must groan again, and to her old fetters: all this the Parliament yet sitting. Although their own late arguments and defences against the Prelates might (remember) them that this obstructing violence meets for the most part with an event utterly opposite to the end which it drives at: instead of suppressing sects and schisms, it raises them and invests them with a reputation: *The punishing of wits enhances their authority*, saith the Viscount St. Albans; *and a forbidden writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth that flies up in the faces of them who seek to*

1086. **fineness**, finesse, cleverness.

1087. **baited down**, harassed until they were down, as in the sport of bear-baiting.

1090. **abrogated**, destroyed.

1090, 1091. **voided out the Church**; by the Bill of 1641. The phrase is an imitation of the Latin ablative absolute. Supply "being" before abrogated.

1095. **commission of twenty**. Cf. l. 955.

1097. **to her old fetters**,

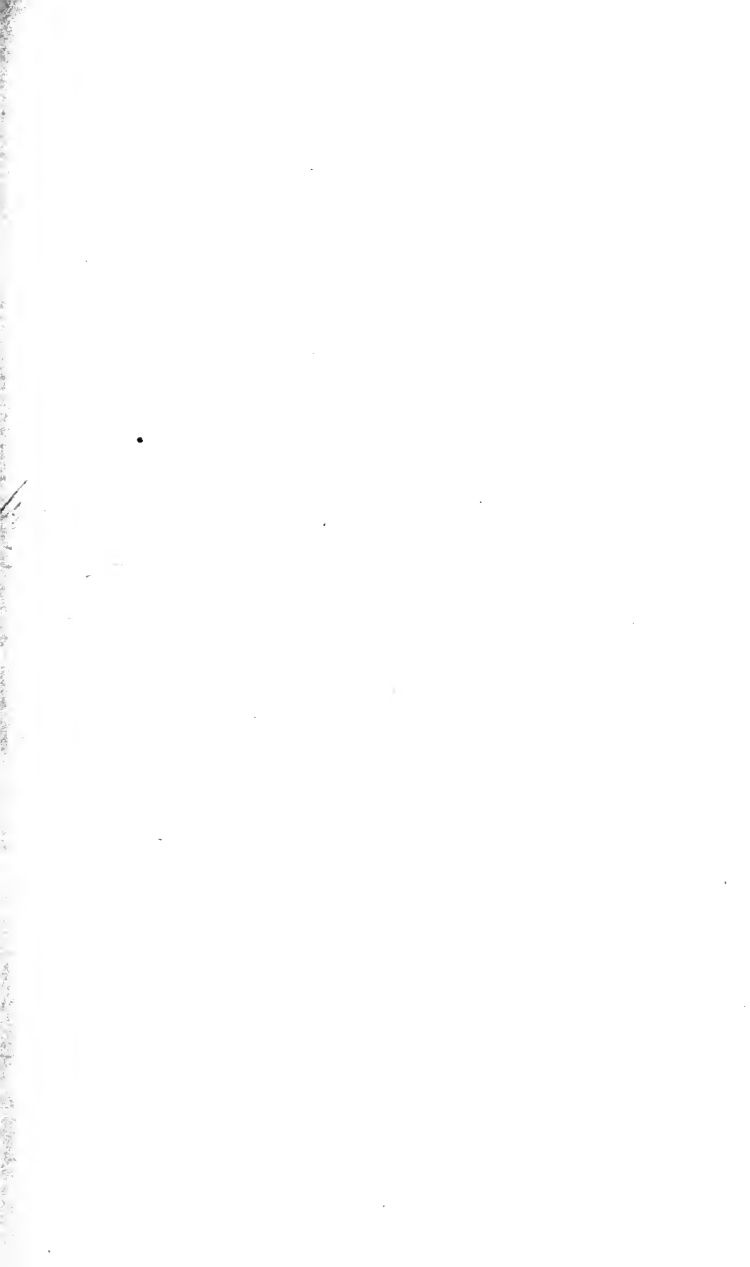
under the same fettering license as was imposed by the Star Chamber.

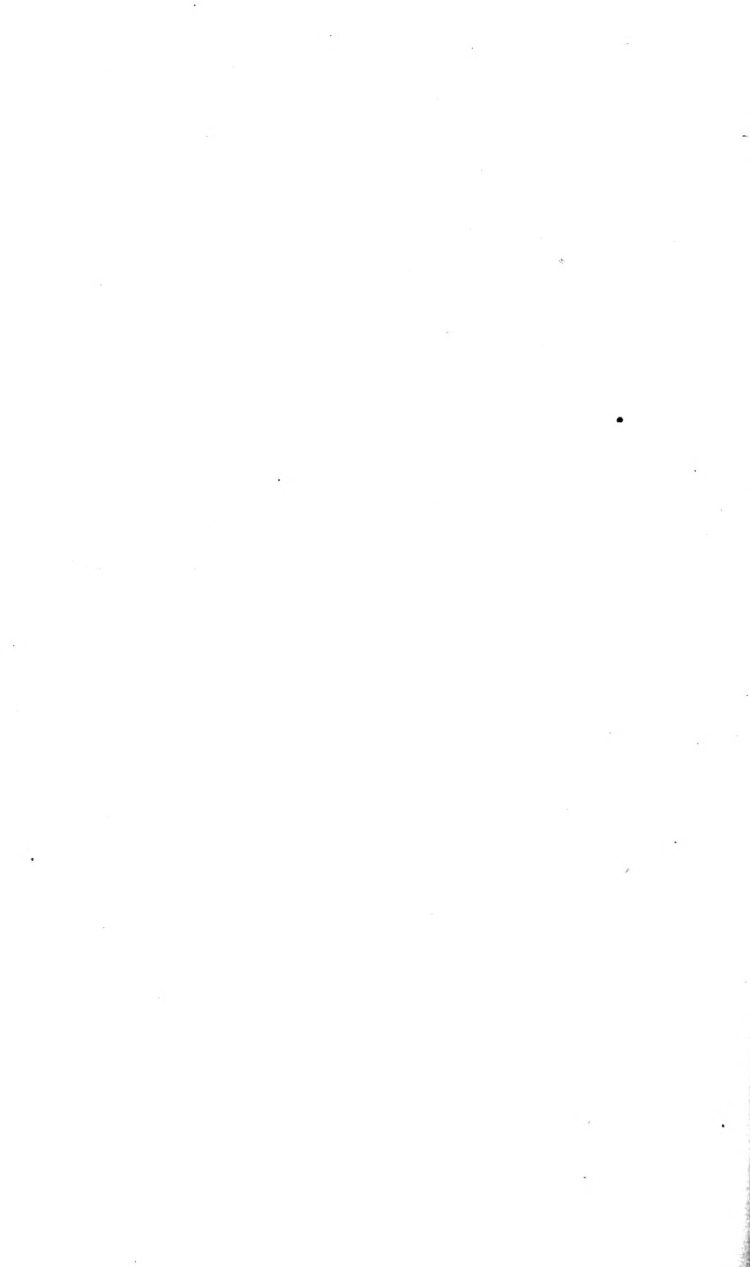
1097, 1098. **all this**, etc. another absolute phrase.

1099. **remember**, remind. The usage was common.

1101. **event**, result. See the references to Prelatical vigour against Prynne and the others in the Chapter entitled "Historical Notes."

1104. **Viscount St. Albans**. Bacon died 1626. The quotation is from his *Apophthegms*.





tread it out. This Order therefore may prove a nursing mother to sects, but I shall easily show how it will be a stepdame to Truth: and first by disabling us to the maintenance of what is known already.

1110

Well knows he who uses to consider, that our faith and knowledge thrives by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion. Truth is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition. A man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believe things only because his Pastor says so, or the Assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy. There is not any burden that some would gladlier post off to another, than the charge and care of their religion. There be (who knows not that there be?) of Protestants and Professors who live and die in as arrant an implicit faith as any lay Papist of Loretto. A wealthy man addicted to his

1120

1107, 1108. may prove a nursing mother. Will not only bring forth but will foster the growth.

1109. stepdame, a step-mother, and therefore, in the popular opinion, unkind.

1109; 1110. to the maintenance of, from maintaining.

1111. uses, is in the habit of, is wont.

1113. complexion, then meant constitution or build. L. *con* = together *plecto* = I weave.

1113. in Scripture. See Psalm lxxxv, 11.

"Truth shall spring out of the earth."

1116. heretic in the truth. The next sentence explains what Milton means. "A truth held only by tradition or from authority and not from inward

conviction is really a heresy."

1120. gladlier, notice the form. An adverb, comparative degree.

1121, 1122. There be of Protestants, there are some among Protestants. A Latinism.

1123. Professors, i.e., of religion, viz., Puritans.

1123. arrant, thorough. A variation of *errant*.

1124. lay, not of the Roman clergy, but deeply believing in the Roman faith.

1124. Papist of Loretto, Loretto is on the east coast of Italy. The house in which the Virgin lived before the birth of Christ is stated to have been translated from Palestine to Loretto by angels, and became the object of the fervid adoration of crowds of pilgrims.

- pleasure and to his profits finds Religion to be a traffic so entangled and of so many piddling accounts, that of all mysteries he cannot skill to keep a stock going upon that trade. What should he do? Fain he would have the name to be religious, fain he would bear up with his neighbours in that.
- 1130 What does he therefore, but resolves to give over toiling and to find himself out some factor to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs; some divine of note and estimation that must be? To him he adheres, resigns the whole warehouse of his religion with all the locks and keys into his custody; and indeed makes the very person of that man his religion; esteems his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendatory of his own piety. So that a man may say his religion is now no more within himself, but is become a dividual movable, and goes and
- 1140 comes near him according as that good man frequents the house. He entertains him, gives him gifts, feasts him, lodges him; his Religion comes home at night, prays, is liberally supped, and sumptuously laid to sleep; rises, is saluted, and, after the malmsey, or some well-spiced brewage, and, better breakfasted than He whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between Bethany and Jerusalem, his Religion

1126. **piddling accounts**, petty details.

1127. **he cannot skill**, he cannot find skill enough.

1129. **bear up with**, keep level with.

1130. **resolves**; indicative where we now use the infinitive "resolve."

1137. **commendatory**, commendation.

1139. **dividual movable**, divisible and movable, a separate entity.

1144. **after the malmsey**. Breakfast in its present form was not yet a recognised meal,

tea and coffee being late introductions. Malmsey wine derives its name from Malvasia, a town in Greece.

1145. **breakfasted**, a participle attributive to "Religion" (*q.v.*).

1145, 1146. **have gladly fed**.

"And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves."—MARK xi. 13.

1146. **his Religion**, *i.e.*, the chaplain; an example of *metonymy*; *cf.* his Majesty, his Holiness, etc.

Cable, 1900

walks abroad at eight, and leaves his kind entertainer in the shop trading all day without his Religion.

Another sort there be, who when they hear that all things shall be ordered, all things regulated and settled, nothing 1150 written but what passes through the custom-house of certain Publicans that have the tunnaging and poundaging of all free-spoken truth, will straight give themselves up into your hands, make 'em and cut 'em out what religion ye please: there be delights, there be recreations and jolly pastimes that will fetch the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightful dream. What need they torture their heads with that which others have taken so strictly and so unalterably into their own purveying? These are the fruits 1160 which a dull ease and cessation of our knowledge will bring forth among the people. How goodly, and how to be wished were such an obedient unanimity as this? What a fine conformity would it starch us all into? Doubtless a staunch and solid piece of framework as any January could freeze together.

Nor much better will be the consequence even among the clergy themselves. It is no new thing never heard of before, for a parochial minister, who has his reward, and is at his Hercules' pillars in a warm benefice, to be easily inclinable, if

1152. **Publicans**, public officers.

1152. **tunnaging and pound-aging**. Used no doubt by Milton as terms hateful to the Long Parliament, who, by withholding the right of tonnage and poundage from the King, had made themselves more powerful.

1159. **into their own purveying**, into their own hands to provide.

1163. **staunch** in its older meaning meant "to stop the flow of blood," from L.L. *stanca*

= a water-dam; afterwards, as here, stout or strong.

1169. **Hercules' pillars**. The rocks on the two sides of the Straits of Gibraltar, which marked the limits of the world as known to the ancients, were called Pillars of Hercules. To be "at Hercules' Pillars," therefore, means to have reached the utmost point of our ambition.

1169. **warm**, snug, comfortable, from a worldly point of view.

1169. **benefice**, living.

- 1170 he have nothing else that may rouse up his studies, to finish his circuit in an English Concordance and a topic folio, the gatherings and savings of a sober graduateship, a *harmony* and a *catena*, treading the constant round of certain common doctrinal heads, attended with their uses, motives, marks and means, out of which, as out of an alphabet or sol-fa, by forming and transforming, joining and disjoining variously a little bookcraft and two hours' meditation, might furnish him unspeakably to the performance of more than a weekly charge of sermoning: not to reckon up the infinite helps of interlinearies, breviaries, synopses, and other loitering gear.) But as for the multitude of sermons ready printed and piled up, on every text that is not difficult, our London trading St. Thomas in his vestry, and add to boot St. Martin, and St. Hugh, have not within their hallowed limits more vendible ware of all sorts ready made: so that penury he never need fear of pulpit provision, having where so plenteously to refresh his magazine. But if his rear and flanks be not impaled, if his back door be not secured by the rigid licenser, but that a bold book may now

1170, 1171. to finish his circuit, to complete the round of his labours, *i.e.*, to extend his studies no further.

1171. Concordances are well known at the present day.

1171. topic folio, a commonplace book.

1172. sober graduateship, a quiet university career.

1172. harmony, for harmonising passages of Scripture apparently contradictory.

1173. catena, a chain or list of authorities.

1177. might, supply "he."

1178. unspeakably, undoubtedly.

1178. charge, fixed duty.

1179, 1180. interlinearies, translation given between the lines of the text.

1180. breviaries, condensations or abridgments.

1180. synopses, catalogues of main points.

1180. loitering gear, helps to the lazy man. *Gear* from A.S. *gearwe* = dress.

1182, 1183. St. Thomas, St. Martin, and St. Hugh. It is a matter of doubt as to whether Milton intended these to refer to the clergymen of particular churches. There was a St. Thomas and more than one St. Martin in London, but no St. Hugh. The markets were frequently held round the churches.

1183. to boot, as an extra; *boot* from A.S. *bot* = advantage.

1187. impaled, fenced in with a pale (palings).

12

X

and then issue forth and give the assault to some of his old collections in their trenches, it will concern him then to keep waking, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinels about his received opinions, to walk the round and counter-round with his fellow inspectors, fearing lest any of his flock be seduced, who also then would be better instructed, better exercised and disciplined. And God send that the fear of this diligence, which must then be used, do not make us affect the laziness of a licensing Church! 1190

For if we be sure we are in the right, and do not hold the truth guiltily, which becomes not, if we ourselves condemn not our own weak and frivolous teaching, and the people for an untaught and irreligious gadding rout, what can be more fair, than when a man judicious, learned, and of a conscience, for aught we know, as good as theirs that taught us what we know, shall not privily from house to house, which is more dangerous, but openly by writing publish to the world what his opinion is, what his reasons, and wherefore that which is now thought cannot be sound? Christ urged it as wherewith to justify himself, that he preached in public; yet writing is more public than preaching; and more easy to refutation, if need be, there being so many whose business and profession merely it is, to be the champions of Truth; which if they neglect, what can be imputed but their sloth, or inability? 1200 1210

Thus much we are hindered and disinured by this course of licensing toward the true knowledge of what we seem to

1196. affect, long for.

1199. becomes not, is not becoming.

1200. and the people, and (we do not condemn) the people.

1201. gadding, connected with "goad," and meaning literally to wander about blindly as if goaded. Ice. *gadda*=to goad.

1201. rout, disorderly rabble.

1208. preached in public;

"Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world."—JOHN xviii, 20.

1209. to refutation, of refutation, to be refuted.

1210. merely, only, entirely. It originally meant 'absolutely.' From *L. merus*=pure, unmixed.

1213. disinured, unaccustomed, losing knowledge for lack of use.

know. For how much it hurts and hinders the licensers themselves in the calling of their ministry more than any secular employment, if they will discharge that office as they ought, so that of necessity they must neglect either the one duty or the other, I insist not, because it is a particular, but leave it to their own conscience, how they will decide it there.

1220

There is yet behind of what I purposed to lay open, the incredible loss and detriment that this plot of licensing puts us to ; more than if some enemy at sea should stop up all our havens, and ports and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richest merchandise, Truth ; nay, it was first established and put in practice by Antichristian malice and mystery (on set purpose) to extinguish, if it were possible, the light of Reformation, and to settle falsehood ; little differing from that policy wherewith the Turk upholds his

1230

Alcoran by the prohibition of printing. 'Tis not denied, but gladly confessed, we are to send our thanks and vows to Heaven, louder than most of nations, for that great measure of truth which we enjoy, especially in those main points between us and the Pope, with his appurtenances the Prelates : but he who thinks we are to pitch our tent here, and have attained the utmost prospect of reformation that the mortal glass wherein we contemplate can show us, till we come to Beatific Vision—that man by this very opinion declares, that he is yet far short of Truth.

1240

Truth indeed came once into the world with her Divine Master, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on ; but when He ascended, and His Apostles after Him were laid

1219. a particular, a matter varying with the individual ; a personal matter.

1223. stop up, by blockade.

1227. on set purpose, with the fixed purpose, deliberately.

1228. settle, make falsehood or false doctrine permanent.

1230. Alcoran. Al=the,

Coran=reading. The Turkish Bible or Koran. Printing was not allowed in Turkey till 1831.

1235. pitch our tent, remain satisfied.

1238. Beatific Vision, face to face with the Almighty. Cf.—

"For now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face."—I. COR. xiii. 12.

asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers, who (as *simi* that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris), took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb still as they could 1250 find them. We have not yet found them all, Lords and Commons, nor ever shall do, till her Master's second coming; He shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection. Suffer not these licensing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking, that continue to do our obsequies to the torn body of our martyred saint. We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the Sun itself, it smites us into darkness. Who can discern those planets that are oft 1260 combust, and those stars of brightest magnitude that rise and set with the Sun, until the opposite motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament, where they may be seen evening or morning? The light which we have gained was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge.

1244, *et seq.* **Typhon, Osiris, Isis.** Typhon and Osiris are represented in the Egyptian mythology as brothers, symbolic of the evil and good principles respectively. The wicked Typhon cut the body of Osiris in pieces, and Isis, the wife of Osiris, searched for the scattered members till all were found. Then, by the aid of her son, Horus, the Sun God, she overthrew Typhon. Milton applies the fable to the search for Truth.

1248. **careful**, full of care, anxious.

1257. **obsequies**, funeral rites of worship.

1260, 1261. **combust**, a planet near the sun is said to be "combust," and cannot, of course, be seen.

1262. **opposite motion**, differing motion, motion in an opposite direction.

1265. **not to be**, not for us to be.

1266. **onward things**, things more advanced

It is not the unfrocking of a priest, the unmitring of a bishop, and the removing him from off the Presbyterian shoulders that will make us a happy nation; no, if other things as great
 1270 in the Church and in the rule of life both economical and political be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze that Zuinglius and Calvin hath beacons up to us, that we are stark blind. There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims. 'Tis their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their syntagma. They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and
 1280 permit not others to unite those dis severed pieces which are yet wanting to the body of Truth. To be still searching what we know not by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is homogeneal, and proportional) this is the golden rule in theology as well as in arithmetic, and makes up the best harmony in a Church; not the forced and outward union of cold and neutral and inwardly divided minds.

here
Ans. Lords and Commons of England! consider what Nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors: a nation
 1290 not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in

1272. **Zuinglius** (1484—1531) a famous Swiss reformer.

1272. **Calvin** (1509-1564), the great leader of the Reformation in France.

1272, 1273. **beacons up**, lighted up as a beacon.

1273. **stark**; A.S. *stearc* = stiff.

1278. **syntagma**, collection of beliefs.

1281. **still**, always.

1281. **searching**, examining.

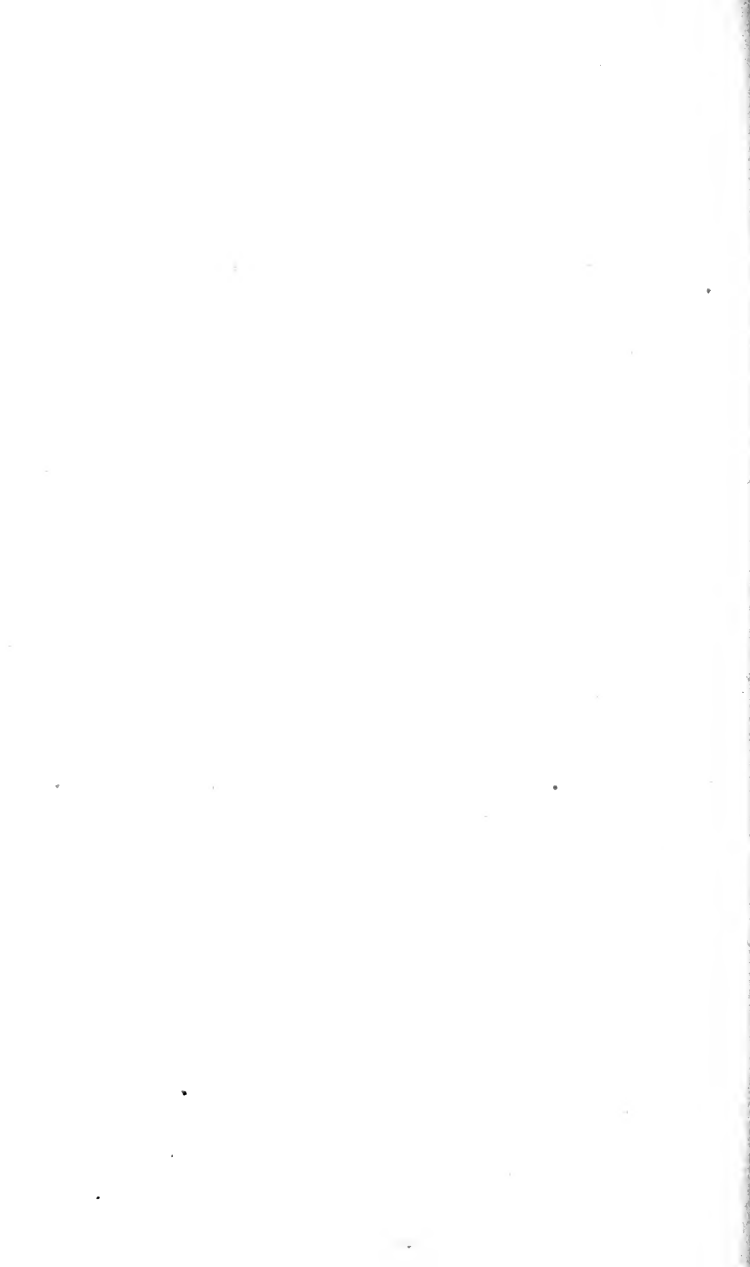
1284. **the golden rule**, the rule of proportion was so called.

1288 *et seq.* **Lords and Commons, etc.** Milton's famous eulogy of the English people.

1294. **so ancient**; a reference to the teachings of the Druids.

maybe?

spelled backward is
am a l u n -



her deepest sciences have been so ancient) and so eminent among us, that writers of good antiquity and ablest judgment have been persuaded that even the school of Pythagoras and the Persian wisdom took beginning from the old philosophy of this island. And that wise and civil Roman, Julius Agricola, who governed once here for Cæsar, preferred the natural wits of Britain before the laboured studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts. Yet that which is above all this, the favour and the love of Heaven we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending towards us. Why else was this Nation chosen before any other, that out of her as out of Sion should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all Europe? And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the

1296. **Pythagoras**, the Stoic, taught the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, which Milton here declares he learnt from the Druids.

1297. **Persian wisdom**. Milton's authority for the statement is a line from Pliny's *Natural History*.

1298. **civil, politic**.

1298. **Julius Agricola**, the famous Roman General who taught the Britons the Roman civilisation. Governor of Britain A.D. 78–85.

1299. **preferred**. This is on the authority of Agricola's son-in-law, Tacitus, in his *Agricola*; *et ingenia Britannorum studiis Gallorum anteferre*. ("And to prefer the natural wit of the Britons to the laborious studies of the Gauls.")

1301. **Transylvanian**. In the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), Transylvania fought well on the Protestant side, and naturally became friendly with England. Cromwell wrote its prince a letter of friendship. There is no direct evidence that many Transylvanian students came to England at that time.

1302. **mountainous borders of Russia**, the spurs of the Carpathians separating Transylvania from Russia.

1303. **Hercynian wilderness**, a general name applied to the mountains and forests of South Germany.

1307. **propending, inclining**.

1311. **our prelates**. See Green's "History of England" for the persecution of the Lollards.

I
 1320 divine and admirable spirit of Wicklef, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Huss and Jerome, no—nor the name of Luther, or of Calvin had been ever known: the glory of reforming all our neighbours had been completely ours. But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence (demeaned) the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and backwardest scholars, of whom God offered to have made us the teachers. Now once again by all concurrence of signs and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in His Church, even to the reforming of Reformation itself. What does He then but reveal Himself to His servants, and as His manner is, first to His Englishmen? I say “as His manner is first to us,” though we mark not the method of His counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast City: a city of refuge, the mansion house of Liberty, encompassed and surrounded with His protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed Justice in defence of

X
 1330

1312. Wicklef. See l. 276.

1313. Huss. See l. 276.

1314. Jerome of Prague (1365-1416). The friend and disciple of Huss; not to be confused with the St. Jerome mentioned in l. 404 and l. 544.

1314. Luther (1483 - 1546). The great leader of the Reformation in Germany.

1317. demeaned, carried out, managed.

1318. of whom, of those whom.

1320. general instinct. Milton no doubt refers to the increasing power of the Independent Party and the coming downfall of Presbyterianism.

1325. first; as in the case of Wycliffe. Milton, in his *Tractate on Divorce*, says:—

“Who was it but our English Constantine that baptized the Roman Empire? Who but the Northumbrian Willibrod and Winifrede of Devon, with their followers were the first Apostles of Germany? Who but Alcuin and Wiclef our Country men opened the eyes of Europe, the one in Arts, the other in Religion? Let not England forget her precedence of teaching nations how to live.”

1328. mansion house of Liberty, the dwelling of Liberty, the place which Liberty has chosen as best fitted for its mansion.

1330. waking, working night and day. Marston Moor had just been fought, and Naseby was yet to come.

1331. plates, breastplates, for defence.

Pat. to ...
...
must ...
...
leaving.



beleaguered Truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching Reformation: others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more from a Nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil, but wise and faithful labourers, to make a knowing people, a Nation of 1340 Prophets, of Sages, and of Worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks; had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already. Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city. What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among 1350 men, to reassume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity, might win all these diligences to join and unite in one general and brotherly search after Truth, could we but forego this prelati- cal tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian

1335. **fealty**, a doublet of fidelity. Latin *fidelitas* = faithfulness.

1336. **trying**, questioning, submitting to trial.

1341. **Prophets.** Cf.—

“And Moses said unto him, ‘Would God that all the people were prophets.’”—NUM. xi 29

1341, 1342. **more than five months.** The *Areopagitica* was published in November. If Milton meant this literally, it must have been written about

April.

1346. **fantastic**, fanciful. Gr. *phantastikos* = fanciful.

1351. **reassume the ill-reputed care.** Refers to the removal of the shackles of the Prelates, and to the consequent possibility of thinking for oneself.

1356. **prelati- cal tradition.** Both words are used offensively. The Council of Trent decided that traditions were to be of equal authority with Scripture.

- liberties into canons and precepts of men. I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to
- 1860 govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of Truth and Freedom, but that he would cry out as Pyrrhus did, admiring the Roman docility and courage: "If such were my Epirots, I would not despair the greatest design that could be attempted to make a Church or Kingdom happy." Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries; as if, while the Temple of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the
- 1870 cedars, there should be a sort of irrational men who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world; neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay, rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure. Let us therefore be more considerate builders, more wise in
- 1880 spiritual architecture, when great reformation is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein Moses the great prophet may sit in Heaven rejoicing to see that memorable

1363. **Pyrrhus**, B.C. 318-272. The words were used after the battle of Heraclea, B.C. 280.

"How easy it would be to seize the empire of the world either to me with the Roman soldiers or to the Romans with me for their king."—FLORUS.

1364. **Epirots**, people of Epirus, in Albanian Turkey.

1366. **for**, as being.

1367. **was building**. "Build-

ing" is a gerund. "Was (a)building" = was being built.

1370. **schism**. Gr. *schizein* = to cleave.

1373. **continuity . . . contiguous**, not one solid whole but made up of many portions fitted close together.

1376. **brotherly dissimilitudes**, general agreement, with little differences, alike and yet different.

and glorious wish of his fulfilled, when not only our seventy elders, but all the Lord's people, are become prophets. No marvel then though some men, and some good men too perhaps, but young in goodness, as Joshua then was, envy them. They fret, and out of their own weakness are in agony, lest these divisions and subdivisions will undo us. The adversary again applauds, and waits the hour: "When they have branched themselves out," saith he, "small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time." Fool! he sees not the firm root, out of which we all grow, though into branches: nor will beware until he see our small divided maniples cutting through at every angle of his ill-united and unwieldy brigade. And that we are to hope better of all these supposed sects and schisms, and that we shall not need that solicitude, honest perhaps though over-timorous, of them that vex in this behalf, but shall laugh in the end, at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to persuade me.

1390

1400

First, when a city shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance and battle oft rumoured to be marching up even to her walls and suburb trenches, that then the people,

1383. **glorious wish.** See note to l. 1341.

1386. **Joshua then was.** Joshua complained to Moses of the prophesying of Eldad and Medad, and received the answer quoted.

1387. **fret,** eat their strength away by anxiety. *Fret, A.S. forgetan* = to eat away thoroughly.

1389. **adversary,** Church of Rome.

1394. **maniples.** A manipule was the name given to a company of Roman soldiers, numbering about 60, and having its own standard bearer.

1398. **vex,** disturb themselves.

1401. **when a city.** See Milton's 3rd sonnet, entitled: "*When the assault was intended to the city.*" In November, 1642, the King advanced as far as Brentford and threatened London, reaching as near as Turnham Green, but fell back when opposed by Essex.

1404. **suburb trenches.**

"At that time (1642) London began her large intrenchments, which encompassed not only the city but the whole suburbs on every side, containing about 12 miles in circuit."—HOLT WHITE.

- or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues first a singular
- 1410 good will, contentedness and confidence in your prudent foresight and safe government, Lords and Commons! And from thence (derives itself to) a gallant bravery and well grounded contempt of their enemies, as if they were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was, who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate, whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment. Next it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in
- 1420 a body, when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these

1408. to a rarity and admiration, both rare and admirable.

1408, 1409. things not before discoursed. The Royal Society is apparently referred to here. The Society had its germ in some meetings of scientific men held about this time.

"We did by agreement, divers of us, meet weekly in London on a certain day to treat and discourse of such affairs as Physics, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Statics, Magnetism, Chymics, Mechanics, and natural experiments."—*Life of Dr. Wallis*.

1412. derives itself to, passes on to, flows on to.

1414. as his was. A captive related to Hannibal that the very piece of ground on which his camp was placed had just been sold in Rome at no diminution in price on that account, 215 B.C.

1421. perdest, most active.

1422. argues, shows.

1422. plight. A.S. *pliht*=risk, danger.

1423. sprightly up, so spiritedly uplifted.



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Handwritten text at the bottom of the page, including the words "open", "field", and "Liberty".

pangs and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of Truth and prosperous Virtue destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unscaling her long abuséd sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms. 1430

What should ye do then? Should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city? Should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? (Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves;) and I will soon show how. If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and free speaking there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild 1440

1429. **wax.** A.S. *wacsian* = to grow.

1431. **Methinks.** The beginning of another splendid passage famous alike for the nobility of its sentiment and its language.

1432. **strong man.** Samson is in his mind.

1434. **mewing,** throwing aside. Fr. *muer*; L. *mutare* = to change.

1435. **undazzled eyes.** In the old Bestiaries of the Middle Ages the eagle is described as making his eyesight keener by flying near the sun, and bathing his eyes in

her beams.

1437. **noise,** noisy crowd. An example of *metonymy*, or of naming the thing by one of its attributes.

1438. **flocking birds,** like the starlings, which fly in flocks.

1439. **gabble.** Ice. *gabba* = to mock.

1443. **oligarchy,** rule by a few. Gr. *oligos* = few, *archein* = to rule.

1444. **engrossers,** such as take every thing (in gross) to themselves.

1446. **bushel.** L.L. *bussulus* = a little box.

1450. **a truer,** i.e., cause.

and free and humane government. It is the liberty, Lords and Commons, which your own valorous and happy counsels have purchased us, Liberty which is the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarefied and enlightened our spirits like the influence of Heaven; this is that which hath enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up our apprehensions degrees above themselves. Ye cannot make us now less capable, less knowing, less eagerly pursuing of the truth, unless ye first make yourselves, that made us so, less the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous, as they were from whom ye have freed us. That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that, unless ye reinforce an abrogated and merciless law, that fathers may despatch at will their own children. And who shall then stick closest to ye, and excite others? Not he who takes up arms for coat and conduct and his four nobles of Danegelt. Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace better, if that were all. Give

1453. **purchased**, obtained. O.F. *purchacer* = to pursue eagerly. *Chase* is from L.L. *caciare* = to chase.

1455. **the influence of Heaven**, a reference to the belief in astrology and to the influence of stars and planets on earthly affairs.

1464. **erected**, upright, confident.

1467. **abrogated**. The law gave the Roman parent power to imprison, chastise, sell as a slave, or put to death, his son. The law was one of the laws of the Twelve Tables, and was abrogated in 318 A.D., but had long before that fallen into

disuse.

1468. **despatch**, kill. Cf. the phrase, "The happy despatch," used of the Chinese method of suicide.

1470. **coat and conduct**, clothing and passage or journey money for levies. Charles I. laid assessments on the counties for these purposes.

1470. **four nobles**, a noble was a coin worth 6s. 8d.

1471. **Danegelt** was a tax laid on every hide of land by the Anglo-Saxons from Ethelred II. to maintain a naval force to oppose the Danes. Charles I. used this as a precedent for the levying of Ship Money.



me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

What would be best advised then, if it be found so hurtful and so unequal to suppress opinions for the newness, or the unsuitableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say; I only shall repeat what I have learned from one of your own honourable number, a right noble and pious lord, who, had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the Church and Commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him I am sure; yet I for honour's sake (and may it be eternal to him!) shall name him—the Lord Brook. He, writing of Episcopacy and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left ye his (vote, or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honoured regard with ye, so full of meekness and breathing charity, that next to His last testament, Who bequeathed love and peace to His disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful. He there exhorts us to hear with patience and humility those, however they be miscalled, that desire to live purely, in such a use of God's ordinances as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerate them, though in some disconformity to ourselves. The book itself will tell us more at large, being published to the world, and

1475. best advised, most advisable.

1476. unequal, unfair. From *L. inæquus* = unfair.

1480. sacrificed his life. Robert Greville, Lord Brooke, was shot in 1643 at Lichfield as he was preparing to assault it with a Parliamentary force.

1480 *et seq.*, who . . . we had not. An *anacoluthon*. See *l. 1 et seq.*

1482. patron, supporter.

1486. vote. *L. votum* = strong wish.

1489, 1490. His last testament.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."—JOHN xiv. 27.

1490. bequeathed. *A.S. cwethan* = to say. The prefix "be" has an intensive force, as in *bedeck*, *begirt*.

1496. disconformity, difference in mode of worship.

1497. at large, at length.

dedicated to the Parliament by him who both for his life and for his death deserves that what advice he left be not laid by
 1500 without perusal.

And now the time in special is by privilege to write and speak what may help to the further discussing of matters in agitation.) The Temple of Janus with his two controversial faces might now not unsignificantly be set open. And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter. Her confuting is the best and surest sup-
 1510 pressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clearer knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of Geneva, framed and fabricked already to our hands. Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise

1502, 1503. in agitation, in question, under discussion.

1503. Temple of Janus. Janus—a form of Dianus—was the Roman God of “Commencements.” He presided over the beginning of everything. He was the guardian deity of gates and doors, and so was represented as “two-faced,” as doors and gates swing inwards and outwards. In times of war he was supposed to go out in aid of the Roman forces, and so his temple was closed.

1503. his. Notice *his* for *its*. See chapter on “Language.”

1503. controversial, turned in opposite directions. *L. contra* = opposite, *verto* = I turn.

1504. set open. The temple

was open in time of war and closed in times of peace.

1509. Her confuting, confuting done by her (*i.e.*, Truth).

1512, 1513. discipline of Geneva, the doctrine as taught by the school of Geneva (Calvin and his followers).

1513. framed and fabricked, drawn up and put together (fabricated).

1515. casements, a shortened form of Fr. *enchassement*, from *L. capsā* = a box.

1516. collusion, in legal language was a secret understanding between two parties to keep up an appearance of variance and disagreement for the purpose of prejudicing the interests of a third party. (A legal term.)

repetition —

metaphorically

superimposes
ideas of war on the
conflict of truth

man to use diligence, to seek for Wisdom as for hidden treasures early and late, that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute? When a man hath been labouring the hardest labour in the deep mines of Knowledge, 1520 hath furnished out his finding in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument; for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valour enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth. For who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty? She needs no 1530 policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious; those are the (shifts) and the defences that Error uses against her power: give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus did, who spake oracles only when he was caught and bound; but (then) rather she turns herself into all shapes, except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice (according to the time, as Micaiah did) before Ahab, until she be (adjured) into her own

1517. seek for wisdom. See Matt. xii. 44 to end.

1522. battle, army; a meaning common at the time.

1525. dint, force. A.S. *dynt* = a blow.

1526. skulk. From Dan. *skulke* = to skulk.

1526, 1527. to keep a narrow bridge, i.e., to compel the writer to advance only by a narrow path—the path of licensing—and not meet him in the open field. Cf. Macaulay's line, "How well Horatius kept the bridge in the brave days of old.

1527. challenger. O.F.

chalonge; L. *calumnia* — a false accusation.

1532. shifts, petty devices. A.S. *scyftan* = to divide.

1534. Proteus. According to Virgil, Proteus knew the present, past and future, and spoke truth only to those who bound him.

1536. then, i.e., when bound by licensing.

1537. according to the time. Cf. Bacon's expression quoted by Milton in *l.* 920.

1537, 1538. as Micaiah did. See 1 Kings xxii. 1-28.

1538. adjured, conjured, commanded back,

likeness. Yet is it not impossible that she may have more
 1540 shapes than one. What else is all that rank of things
 indifferent, wherein Truth may be on this side or on the other
 without being unlike herself? What but a vain shadow else
 is the abolition of *those ordinances, the hand-writing nailed to*
the cross? What great purchase in this Christian liberty which
 (Paul so often boasts of? His doctrine is, that he who eats or
 eats not, regards a day or regards it not, may do either to the
 28 Lord. How many other things might be tolerated in peace,
 and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the
 chief stronghold of our hypocrisy to be ever judging one
 1550 another! I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath
 left a slavish print upon our necks; the ghost of a linen
 decency yet haunts us. We stumble and are impatient at the
 least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though
 it be not in fundamentals; and through our forwardness to
 suppress, and our backwardness to recover any enthralled piece
 of Truth out of the grip of Custom, we care not to keep
 truth separated from truth, which is the fiercest rent
 and disunion of all. We do not see that while we
 still affect by all means a rigid external formality, we may as
 1560 soon fall again into a gross conforming stupidity, a stark and
 dead congealment of *wood and hay and stubble* forced and

1541. indifferent, true or not true, according to circumstances.

1543, 1544. **nailed to the cross.** See the reference in Colossians to Christ's redemption of our sins.

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."—COL. ii. 14.

1545. Paul so often. Cf.—

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."—GAL. v. i.

1546. regards, supply "who."

1551, 1552. linen decency, an outward decency.

1559. affect, desire, aim to obtain.

1559. a rigid external formality, a rigid observance of external forms, like the Pharisees.

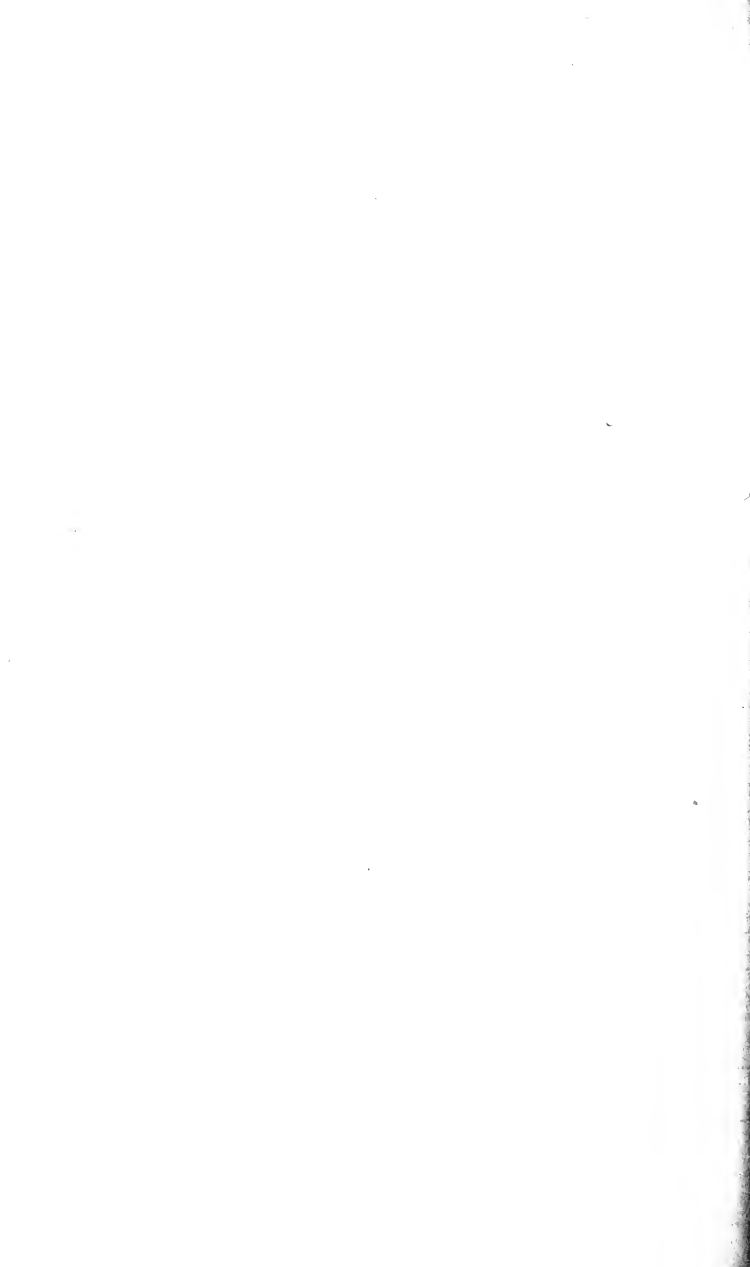
1560. stark, stiff, rigid. A.S. *stearc*=strong.

1561. wood and hay and stubble. Cf.—

"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble . . . the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."—

1 Cor. iii. 12, 13.

- evil



frozen together, which is more to the sudden degenerating of a church than many subdichotomies of petty schisms. Not that I can think well of every light separation, or that all in a Church is to be expected *gold and silver and precious stones*; it is not possible for man to sever the wheat from the tares, the good fish from the other fry; that must be the angels' ministry at the end of mortal things. Yet if all cannot be of one mind (as who looks they should be?), this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian—that many be tolerated, 1570 rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated Popery, and open superstition, which, as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate, provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and misled; that also which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or manners no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw itself; but those 1580 neighbouring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt

1563. **subdichotomies**, minute sub-divisions. From the Greek, *dicha*=asunder, *temnein*=to cut.

1564. **light separation**. A separation for light or slight cause.

1565. **gold**, etc. See quotation to l. 1561.

1566. **to sever the wheat**. A reference to the parable of the wheat and the tares, Matt. xiii. 24-30 and 37-43.

1567. **fry**, lit. the spawn of fish; here means small fish of any kind. Ice. *fræe*=spawn.

1567. **angels' ministry**. Cf.

“So shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels,” etc. —MATT. xiii. 40, etc.

1569. **looks**, expects.

1571. **tolerated Popery**. Popery was too recent in its inquisitions, and too deeply hated by Puritan England, to be tolerated as it is now in these days of wider enlightenment.

1572. **all religions**, all other religions.

1572, 1573. **civil supremacies**. The Popes claimed supreme temporal power.

1573. **extirpate**. A Latin form for extirpated. L. *ex*, and *stirps*=the stem of a tree. Cf. frustrate in ll. 708 and 776.

1577. **unlaw itself**, destroy its power as a law.

1578. **neighbouring differences**. Cf. l. 1376.

the unity of Spirit, if we could but find among us the bond of peace. In the meanwhile if any one would write and bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving reformation which we labour under, *if Truth have spoken to him* before others, or but seemed at least to speak, who hath so *bejesuited us* that we should trouble that man with asking license to do so worthy a deed, and not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself; whose first appearance to our eyes, bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unpalatable than many errors, even as the person is of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to. And what do they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others; and this is the chief cause why sects and schisms do so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us; besides yet a greater danger which is in it. For when God shakes a Kingdom with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, 'tis not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is, that God then raises to His own work men of rare abilities and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further and go on some enlightened steps in the discovery of truth. For such is the order of God's enlightening His Church, to dispense and deal out by degrees His beam, so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it. Neither is God appointed and confined, where and

1581. *unity of Spirit.* Cf.

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—EPHESIANS IV. 3.

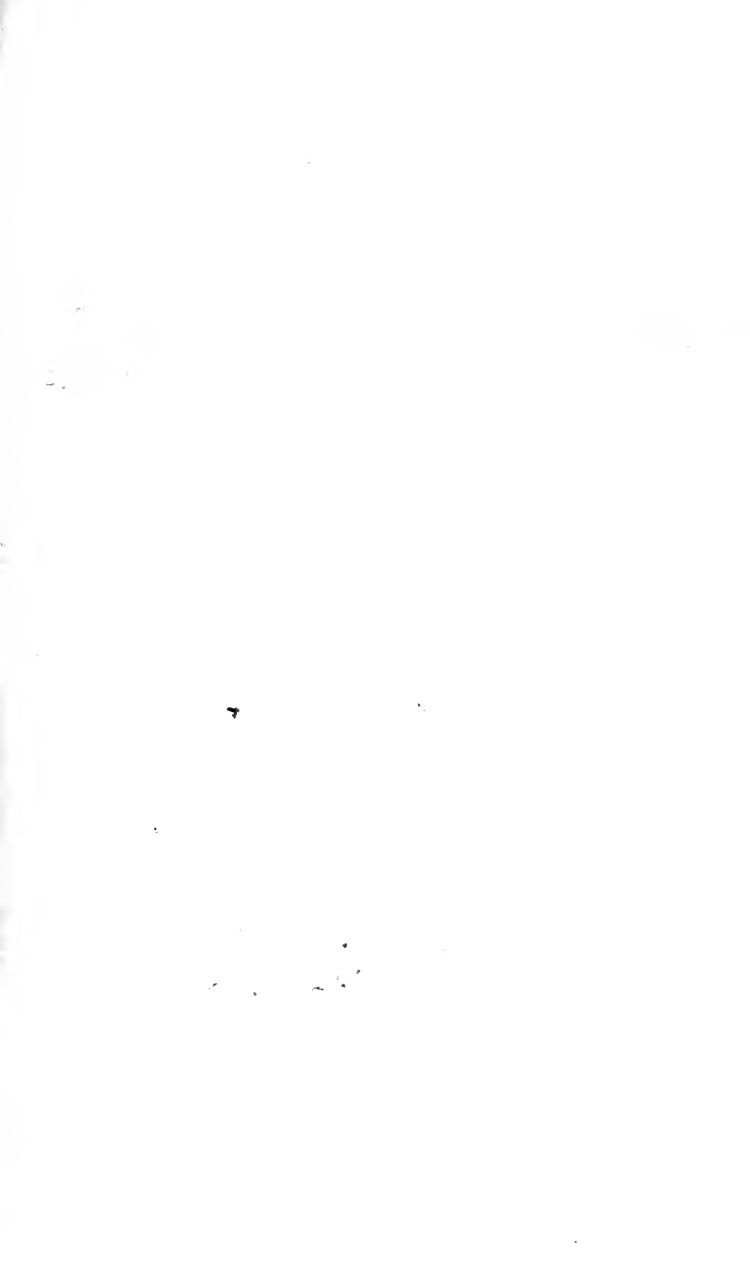
1584. *if Truth hath spoken to him.* Cf.

"If a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him."—ACTS XXIII. 9.

1585. *bejesuited us*, made us act like the Jesuits. See note to l. 573.

1600. *sectaries*, founders of sects.

1608. *appointed and confined*, under direction and subject to limitation; *i.e.*, there is no limit to God's will.





out of what place these His chosen shall be first heard to speak; for He sees not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote ourselves again to set places and assemblies and (outward callings) of men; planting our faith one while in the old Convocation House, and another while in the Chapel at Westminster; when all the faith and religion that shall be there canonised is not sufficient, without plain convincement and the charity of patient instruction, to (supple) the least bruise of conscience, to edify the meanest Christian, who desires to walk in the Spirit, and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made; no, though Henry the Seventh himself there with all his liege tombs about him should lend them voices from the dead to swell their number. And if the men be erroneous who appear to be the leading schismatics, what withholds us but our sloth, our self-will, and distrust in the right cause, that we do not give them gentle meetings and gentle dismissions, that we debate not and examine the matter thoroughly with liberal and frequent audience; if not for their

1612. **outward callings of men, i.e.,** the clergy.

1613. **old Convocation House**, the Chapter House at Westminster, where Convocation was held after Wolsey's time. The power of Convocation was, of course, very much greater then than now, as the clergy claimed temporal jurisdiction, etc. The Convocation of 1640 caused great discontent to the Puritans.

1614. **Chapel at Westminster**, where the Westminster Assembly of Divines, called together to formulate a new scheme of Church Worship, was held in 1643.

1615. **canonised**, drawn up into regulations or canons. The Assembly drew up a Directory

of Worship and Ordination, a Confession of Faith, and the Larger and the Shorter Catechism.

1616. **convincement**, conviction.

1617. **supple**, make supple, heal. L. *supplex*, from *sub*=under, *plecto*=I fold.

1621. **liege tombs**. An allusion to Henry VII.'s chapel, where the tomb of the king is surrounded by those of his mother, his grandchildren, Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots, and his great grandson, James I. "Liege" is from Ger. *ledig*=free, through Fr. *lige*.

1626. **dismissions**, sendings away, departures. In Modern English, "dismissals."

sakes, yet for our own, seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those
 1630 who—not contented with stale receipts—are able to manage and set forth new positions to the world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armoury of Truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath fitted for the special use of these times with eminent and ample gifts—and those perhaps neither among the Priests, nor among the Pharisees—and we in the haste of a precipitant zeal shall
 1640 we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly forejudge them ere we understand them; no less than woe to us, while thinking thus to defend the Gospel we are found the persecutors.

There have been not a few since the beginning of this Parliament, both of the Presbytery and others, who by their unlicensed books to the contempt of an Imprimatur first broke that triple ice clung about our hearts, and taught the people to see day: I hope that none of those were the persuaders to renew upon us this bondage which they themselves have
 1650 wrought so much good by contemning. But if neither the check that Moses gave to young Joshua, nor the countermand which our Saviour gave to young John, who was so ready to

1630. *manage*, undertake. From L. *manus*=the hand, through Fr. *manéger*=the managing of a horse.

1631. *set forth*, expound, lay out.

1632. *in that notion*, i.e., as being considered but dust.

1641. *forejudge*, modern prejudice.

1644, 1645. *this Parliament*, began on Nov. 3rd, 1640. Milton's spelling—Parlament—is more correct.

1646. *to the contempt of an Imprimatur*, i.e., in spite of the ordinance of 1637.

1647. *triple ice*. Suggested by a phrase from Horace, "Aes triplex circa pectus erat" (Around his breast was a triple brass). Supply *which* after ice.

1651. *check*. See the note to l. 1386.

1652. *young John*, the youngest of the apostles. For the rebuke see St. Luke ix. 49, 50.

prohibit those whom he thought unlicensed, be not enough to admonish our Elders how unacceptable to God their testy mood of prohibiting is; if neither their own remembrance what evil hath abounded in the Church by this let of licensing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be not enough, but that they will persuade, and execute the most Dominican part of the Inquisition over us, and are already with one foot in the stirrup so active in suppressing, it would be no unequal distribution in the first place to suppress the suppressors themselves: whom the change of their condition hath puffed up, more than their late experience of harder times hath made wise.

And as for regulating the Press, let no man think to have the honour of advising ye better than yourselves have done in that Order published next before this: That no book be Printed, unless the Printer's and the Author's name, or at least the Printer's be registered. Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectual remedy that man's prevention can use. For this authentic Spanish policy of licensing books, if I have said

1654. **Elders**, *i.e.*, Presbyters. Gr. *presbyter* = elder.

1654. **testy**, lit. heady, and therefore headstrong; done in heat without thought.

1656. **let**, impedimen^t. A.S. *latian* = to hinder.

"I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."—*Hamlet*.

1659. **Dominican**. See note to l. 1022.

1667. **Order published next before this**. This was an Order of January 1641, and was as follows:—"The Masters and Wardens of the Company of Stationers shall be requested to take especial order that the Printers do neither print nor reprint anything without the

name and consent of the author. And that if any Printer shall notwithstanding print or reprint anything without the consent of the author, that he shall then be proceeded against as both Printer and Author thereof." This was "next but one," not "next before this."

1671. **fire**, referring to the public burning of books condemned.

1671. **executioner**, used in the general sense of one who executes or carries out punishments of any kind ordered by the Courts.

1673. **authentic**, genuinely, truly. Gr. *authentikos* = warranted.

Dominican a black friar
Torquemada - the introducer of the
Spanish Inquisition was one

- aught, will prove the most unlicensed book itself within a short while; and was the immediate image of a Star Chamber decree to that purpose made in those very times when that Court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fallen from the stars with Lucifer. Whereby ye may guess what kind of state prudence, what love of the people, what care of religion or good manners there was at the contriving, although with singular hypocrisy it pretended to bind books to their good behaviour. And how it got the upper hand of your precedent order so well constituted before, if we may believe those men whose profession gives them cause to inquire most, it may be doubted there was in it the fraud of some old patentees and monopolisers in the trade of book-selling who, under pretence of the poor in their Company (not to be defrauded, and the just retaining of each man his several copy (which God forbid should be gainsaid), brought divers glozing colours to the House, which were indeed but colours, and serving to no end except it be to exercise a

1674. aught. A.S. *a*=one, *wiht*=thing.

1675. immediate image, direct result and copy.

1675, 1676. Star Chamber decree. That of 1637, of which an analysis is given in the "Introduction."

1677. rest of those. See cases of Prynne, Bastwick, etc., in "Historical Notes."

1678. now fallen. The Star Chamber was abolished in 1641.

1678. Lucifer. The Morning Star. L. *Lux*=light, *fero*=I bring. The name given to Venus when it rises before the sun. As the sun's morning rays get more and more powerful, Lucifer appears to fall gradually from the heavens. The name is therefore applied to Satan. Cf.—

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning."—ISAIAH xiv. 12.

1679. state prudence, state policy.

1683. precedent order, as quoted in note to l. 1667.

1685. doubted, suspected.

1686. patentees and monopolizers, those who had already licensed presses under the Star Chamber decree.

1687. under pretence. See the Parliament decree in the "Introduction."

1688. not to be defrauded. A Latinism, corresponding to the gerundive,

1689. several and separate are doublets.

1690. glozing, specious, fair seeming but not true. Gr. *glossa*=a word needing explanation.



superiority over their neighbours: men who do not therefore labour in an honest profession to which learning is indebted, that they should be made other men's vassals. Another end is thought was aimed at by some of them in procuring by petition this order, that having power in their hands, malignant books might the easier scape abroad, as the event shows. (But of these sophisms and elenchs of merchandise I skill not: This I know that errors in a good government and in a bad are equally almost incident; for what magistrate may not be misinformed, and much the sooner, if liberty of printing be reduced into the power of a few; but to redress willingly and speedily what hath been erred, and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertisement more than others have done a sumptuous bribe, is a virtue, honoured Lords and Commons, answerable to your highest actions, and whereof none can participate but greatest and wisest men.

1694. **they**, here means "men of learning."

1695, 1696. **procuring by petition**. Several of the most eminent Puritan divines petitioned Parliament in 1641 to prevent abuses of copyright and the importation of English books from abroad.

1697. **malignant**. Books in favour of the Cavaliers, whom the Puritans called Malignants.

1698. **sophisms**, false argument, in which the false is made to appear true.

1698. **elenchs**, false answers to a sophism. Gr. *elenchos* = a disapproval.

1698. **merchandise**. Milton spells it "marchandize." Cf. Fr. *marchandise*. L. *merx*, *mercis* = merchandise.

1699. **skill not**, trouble not myself. Ice. *skil* = a distinction.

1700. **equally almost**, almost equally.

1703. **been erred**, done by error.

1704. **advertisement**, calling of attention. Fr. *avertissement*, from *avertir* = to inform. L. *advertere* = to turn towards.

1706. **answerable to**, in accordance with, on a level with. A.S. *andswarian* = to answer.

ball
and all
it is all

APPENDIX.



Historical Notes.



In a book like Milton's *Areopagitica*, where references are made to the whole range of classical literature, and where the passions and thoughts of the time find constant expression or allusion, it is difficult to select that part of history which throws most light upon the matter of the book. The following brief notes should, however, be sufficient to give the student an historical foundation sufficient to prepare him to breathe the atmosphere of the book—to make the book to him not an absolutely dead thing, but one containing a potency of life.

Greek Philosophy.—PRE-SOCRATIC, 600-450 B.C. The earliest Greek philosophers lived either in Asia Minor or in Italy, and were divided into two schools—the IONIC and the ITALIC.

The leaders of the Ionic school attempted to explain the material origin of the world, and gave as the first element either *water* (according to the teaching of *Thales*), *air* (according to the teaching of *Anaximenes*), or *fire* (according to the teaching of *Heraclitus*). The last, called the “weeping Philosopher,” taught that existence is only a transient position, that everything is becoming something else, and that all matter is in a state of continual motion.

The Italic school attempted to explain the “ideals” from which the world resulted. Their leader, *Pythagoras* (500 B.C.), gave number and proportion as the ruling principles of the world. He also taught the doctrines of transmigration and of

the immortality of the soul. Incidentally he encouraged vegetarianism and gymnastics. *Parmenides* gave life and darkness as the two principles, *Empedocles* (450 B.C.) preferred love and hatred, *Anaxagoras* (450 B.C.) thought everything resulted from the combination of original seeds, while *Democritus* (450 B.C.) first developed the theory of atoms.

The study of Philosophy became so popular in Athens that teachers of the various systems, and of Rhetoric and Dialectic, became numerous, and were known as SOPHISTS, or teachers of wisdom. Of these *Protagoras* is best known.

Socrates (470-390 B.C.) first made Philosophy exact. He taught that the first step towards Knowledge was to be convinced of Ignorance, and the second to advance from clear particular notions to clear general ones. His best-known pupils were *Xenophon*, who described his doctrines in the "*Memorabilia*," and *Plato* who expounded and expanded the teachings of Socrates in all his writings. "*The Republic*" of Plato is mentioned in "*Areopagitica*."

The Socratic
School.

Following Socrates and Plato the four best-known schools or systems of Athens were the PERIPATETIC, the CYNIC, the STOIC, and the EPICUREAN.

The Peripatetic School was led by *Aristotle*, the pupil of Plato and tutor of Alexander the Great. His books on Logic, etc., are well known, and his principles are extensions of those of Socrates. His famous four causes of anything—the Ideal, the Material, the Process, the Incitement are well known.

The founder of the Cynic School was *Antisthenes*, who taught that nothing is good but virtue, nothing evil but vice, and that most men are fools and slaves. (*Cf.* "The cynic impudence" of l. 184.)

Zeno (300 B.C.) founded the Stoic School, and taught that Philosophy was identical with virtue; that the natural life was the best, and that emotions should be conquered, as tending to

overcome nature. He taught also that no man was perfectly wise, but should endeavour to advance towards perfection.

Epicurus (300 B.C.) taught that we should always trust our sensations, and that virtue led to happiness. He himself preferred a permanent tranquillity to momentary gratification, and mental pleasures before bodily ones; but his followers made the pursuit of pleasure the only good.

Note that the PLATONIC SCHOOL is sometimes called the ACADEMY; the STOIC SCHOOL is sometimes called the PORCH; the EPICUREAN SCHOOL is sometimes called the GARDEN, from the places where their expounders taught, and that the visit of the Greek Philosophers to Rome in B.C. 155 had great influence in extending the Greek Philosophy to the Latin writers, particularly influencing Cicero.

The Council of Trent, so frequently quoted by Milton, was instituted by Charles V., Emperor of Germany, for the avowed purpose of settling the controversies between Protestant and Roman Catholic. Its first meeting was held at Trent in the Austrian Tyrol, on Dec. 13, 1545, and its last on Dec. 4, 1563. It proved too Roman Catholic in its judgments to please the Protestants, the Index of Prohibited Books and the Index Expurgatorius both originating from it, while the Pope Pius IV. thought that the holding of its meetings at Trent, in the territory of Charles V., gave the Emperor too much influence in its discussions, and it was by his command that the Council dissolved in 1563.

The Spanish Inquisition. — The origin of the Spanish Inquisition is detailed in the notes. The burning hatred of Spain originated in the Marian persecutions, for which Spanish influence and example were blamed; and was fanned by anger at the stories of torture told by Elizabethan sailors who suffered imprisonment in Spain, by the attempted conquest of England by the Spanish Armada, and by the bloody severities of Alva upon our Protestant brethren in the Netherlands. The

attempted Spanish match which Buckingham and Charles, when Prince of Wales, set out to accomplish in 1623 A.D., kindled again these fires of rage, while the repressive Acts of Laud and his Court of High Commission did not a little to keep them ablaze.

Early English Licensing Acts.—Although Milton lays the blame of the Licensing decree primarily upon the previous Star Chamber decree of 1637, both Catholic and Protestant English, when in power, had previously attempted to restrict the liberty of the opposing press. Thus, in the reign of Mary, in 1559, a decree was passed that no one was to print a book or paper without the previous licence of the Privy Council or of a Bishop, while in 1585, under Protestant Elizabeth, by a decree of the Court of High Commission, almost as strong as that of the Star Chamber in 1637, it was enacted that:—

Presses had to be registered.

All printing was prohibited, except in London, and one press each for Oxford and Cambridge.

All books were to be approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London.

Power to search, seize, and destroy illicit presses was granted.

The Star Chamber was first instituted in the reign of Edward III., and was held in the “Camera Stellata,” but was not at first called the Star Chamber. In its later form it was inaugurated by Henry VII., in 1488, and consisted of the Chancellor, the Treasurer, and two of the Chief Justices. To these Henry VIII. added the President of the Privy Council, while under the Stuarts it was practically identical with the Privy Council. As Charles II. ruled from 1629 to 1640 by aid of a Cabin, or Cabinet Council, of the Privy Council, the Star Chamber became that body impossible in a freedom-loving country—a body at once legislative and juridical, *i.e.*, at once making and enforcing laws.

As constituted, it was practically a court of criminal equity, taking under its notice such offences as forgery, perjury, riot, maintenance, fraud, libel, conspiracy, breach of proclamations. It had power to inflict any penalty short of death. Some of the penalties it inflicted, and which made it greatly hated by the Puritans, were :—

1629. ALEXANDER LEIGHTON was degraded from holy orders, whipped at Westminster, set in the pillory, had one ear cut, one side of his nose slit, and one cheek branded S.S. (Sower of Sedition). This was repeated at Cheapside the next week, and was followed by imprisonment for life. His offence was the writing of a pamphlet, *Sion's Plea Against Prelacy*.

1637. DR. OSBALDISTON, Master of Westminster School, was fined £3,000—£5,000 to the court, and £3,000 to Laud—was to be deprived of his office, and placed, with his ears nailed to the pillory, in Dean's Yard, Westminster, opposite his school, and afterwards imprisoned during pleasure. His offence was writing disrespectfully of Laud in a private letter.

1637. PRYNNE, BURTON and BASTWICK were fined £5,000, set in the pillory, had their ears cut off, were branded on both cheeks, imprisoned for life, allowed access neither to kindred nor friends, deprived of books and writing materials. Their sole offence was the writing of pamphlets against the prelates.

1638. LILBURNE was whipped from the Fleet to Westminster, set in the pillory, and imprisoned during pleasure.

Clarendon, in his *History of the Rebellion*, speaks of :—

“The Council Table (*i.e.*, Milton's Cabin Council) by proclamation enjoining to the people what was not enjoined by the law, and prohibiting that which was not prohibited; and the Star Chamber censuring the breach and disobedience to those proclamations by very great fines and imprisonment; so that any disrespect to any Acts of State, or to the persons of statesmen, was in no time more penal, and those foundations of right by which men valued their security, to the apprehension and understanding of wise men, never more in danger to be destroyed.”

The Court of High Commission was instituted by Elizabeth in 1583 to execute, by means of commissioners, the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of every kind vested in her by the Act of

Supremacy. The number of commissioners was 44, of whom 12 were prelates. Five, one to be a bishop, formed a quorum. Their duties were :—

“To enquire generally by the oaths of 12 good and lawful men, or by witnesses, and all other means they could devise, of all matters affecting religion, such as heretical and schismatic opinions, absence from church, *sedition books*, slanderous words and sayings, incests, adulteries, and other immoralities : to examine all suspected persons on their oath : to tender the oath of Supremacy according to the Act of Parliament, and to punish all who should refuse to appear or to obey their orders, by excommunication, fine, and imprisonment.”

Just as Strafford found his Star Chamber, and the councils of the North and Wales, instruments ready to his hand for his “thorough” system, so Laud made similar use of the Court of High Commission, and made it and its “officials” equally hated by the Puritans.

Presbyterianism.—The long controversy between Prelate and Puritan began with the famous Marprelate Controversy of 1587. In this controversy the leaders on the Puritan side were Penry, Barrow, and Udall, and their best known pamphlets were called *The Epistle*, *The Epitome*, and *Hay any work for Cooper*. Bridges, Dean of Sarum, and Cooper, Bishop of Winchester, were their chief opponents, and Aylmer, Bishop of London, was freely attacked. The conflict was not restricted only to the clerical disputants, but every wit, John Lyly amongst them, threw his hatchet into the fight.

Thomas Cartwright in 1591 introduced into England the Presbyterian form of Puritanism, and from that time it spread rapidly. Cartwright, who was a Divinity Professor at Cambridge, had previously attempted to reform abuse in the Episcopal Church. For his endeavours to introduce Presbyterianism he was imprisoned by the Court of High Commission, and threatened with banishment by the Star Chamber, but was finally released on bail. The punishments inflicted on the Puritans intensified their desire for civil and

religious liberty. The attitude of James I. towards them was a keen disappointment, as they had great hopes in a King from Presbyterian Scotland. The Enunciation of the Doctrine of Divine Right by the Hampton Court Conference, in 1604, annoyed them still more, and from that time till the Civil War they were always bitterly opposed to the Church, and watchful of the King.

The war of pamphlets did not die out with the Marprelate Controversy, but was continued throughout the whole of the reign of James I., Charles I., and the Commonwealth. No less than 30,000 pamphlets appeared between 1640 and 1660. The best known of these are the *Smectymnuus* series, a series of pamphlets against Prelacy, which were named by putting together the initials of the writers.* Bishop Hall, of Norwich, who had made himself famous by his *Satires*, and his book *Mundus alter et idem*, took the Prelate's side in the controversy, and received a virulent reply from Milton in his *Apology for Smectymnuus*, 1641.

The Long Parliament.—These are the Acts for which Milton praises the Long Parliament in his exordium:—

1641. The impeachment of Strafford and Laud.

The impeachment of six judges for their conduct with regard to Ship Money.

The release of Prynne, Burton, Bastwick, Leighton and Lilburne (Osbaldiston had escaped before punishment.)

The grant of a subsidy to the Scots—£25,000 per month and a lump sum of £300,000.

The Triennial Act, ordering Parliament to be summoned before September 3 every third year. No future Parliament to be dissolved, prorogued, or adjourned within fifty days, except by its own consent.

* Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, William Spurstow.

he granting of Tonnage and Poundage for two months only.

The denunciation of Ship Money as illegal.

The abolition of the Star Chamber, Court of High Commission, Court of President and Council of the North, Court of President and Council of the Welsh Marshes, Palatine Courts of Lancaster and Cheshire.

Resisting the Extension of Royal Forests.

The Restriction of Purveyance.

The abolition of Compulsory Knighthood.

Long Parliament not to be dissolved without its own consent.

Clergy disabled from holding temporal power. «

On their measures Hallam remarks :—

(1) "They made scarce any material change in our constitution such as it had been established and recognized under the House of Plantagenet."

(2) "By these salutary restrictions, and some new retrenchments of pernicious or abused prerogative, the Long Parliament formed our constitution such, nearly, as it now exists."

The Civil War.—The events of the Civil War bear but slightly on the book, the only reference occurring being to the time of the King's threatened advance on London, which is described in the notes.

Examination Questions.



1. What reasons does Milton give for writing in defence of the liberty of the Press?

2. Name a few of the prose works which Milton wrote (a) before, (b) after the *Areopagitica*, stating briefly the objects of each.

3. Discuss Milton's position on religious toleration, illustrating your answer from the *Areopagitica*.

4. Write down at least six lines of the passage beginning "Lords and Commons of England," or, "Methinks I see before me."

5. Milton's prose is sometimes blamed for (a) coarse invective, (b) coarse humour. Do these faults appear in the *Areopagitica*?

6. Give the main divisions of Milton's arguments.

7. What was the *direct* cause of Milton's writing?

8. What do you consider the chief peculiarities and difficulties of Milton's style?

9. What does *Areopagitica* mean, and how does the name fit in with the contents of the book?

10. Milton's style is freely criticised. Mention a few of the criticisms and discuss them. 165-66

11. How does Milton's spelling differ from modern spelling? 31

12. Give the substance of (a) The Star Chamber Decree, (b) The Parliamentary Ordinance.

13. Give the history of Press restrictions in England. What is the present state of the law?

14. On what class of poetic work was Milton engaged about the same time (1644)?

15. What references to (a) current events, (b) Milton himself, occur in the book?

16. To which of his contemporaries or predecessors in English literature does Milton refer?

17. Write an essay on "Reading in General," using Milton's matter as the substance of the essay.

18. What are the precedents for press restrictions which Milton quotes, and what conclusion does he derive from them?

19. "Restriction is a direct evil." What instances does Milton give?

20. Give an account of (a) the Star Chamber, (b) the Council of Trent, (c) the Jesuits, stating their connection with the book.

21. Explain the phrases: "cloistered virtue," "in the eye," "potency of life," "linen decency," "mewing her mighty youth," "twelve tables," "quadragesimal," "check that Moses gave," "private orator," "Persian wisdom."

22. Paraphrase *p.* 78, *ll.* 1550 to 1560; *p.* 74, *ll.* 1451 to 1468.

23. How does Milton's language compare with that of (a) the Bible, (b) Modern English?

24. What change in meaning have the words *success*, *event*, *altered*, *prevent*, *let*, undergone since Milton's time?

25. How does Milton appeal to the Long Parliament?

26. What were the main acts of the Long Parliament up to the writing of the book?

27. Give a brief history of the religious controversies of the period.

28. Upon what model is the book founded?

29. Give a brief analysis of the arguments brought forward by Milton.

30. What are Milton's references to Wiclef and Huss?

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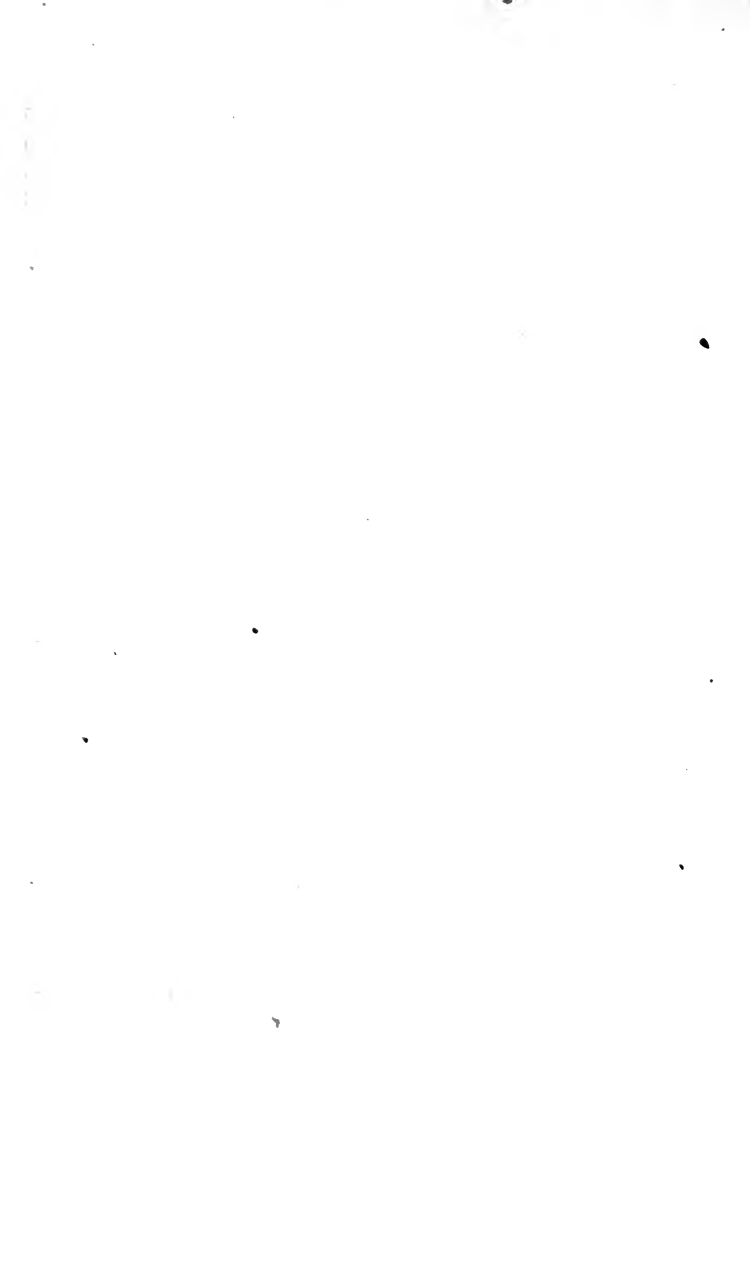
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